

Wednesday, July 17, 1996

COLUMN

Singapore cowboys arrested on freeway

Kabariti, Saudi foreign minister discuss peace process

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti Wednesday exchanged views by telephone with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal on the latest developments in the peace process and efforts to ensure its resumption on all tracks of the negotiations with the purpose of reaching a comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East.

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Netanyahu under pressure ahead of visit to Egypt

CAIRO (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's senior political adviser Dore Gold arrived in Cairo on Wednesday to prepare for Mr. Netanyahu's visit to Egypt, airport sources said.

They said Mr. Gold, who did not speak to reporters on his arrival, would meet Osama El Baz, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's senior political adviser.

Mr. Netanyahu, whose headline stance on Arab-Israeli peace talks has dismayed Arab states, is due to meet Mr. Mubarak on Thursday. It will be his first trip to an Arab country since his triumph in Israel's May elections.

Mr. Baz said in an interview published on Wednesday he believed Mr. Netanyahu would eventually bow to international pressure and endorse the land for peace formula which Arab states maintain as the bedrock for peace negotiations.

"Israel cannot say and do

whatever it likes, because it made a contract at the (1991) Madrid conference... It also accepted the principle of land-for-peace and the legitimate political rights of the Palestinian people," Mr. Baz told the French language Al-Ahram.

"That Israel, almost five years after the Madrid conference, should choose what is convenient to it and reject what it doesn't like shows a lack of good faith in the negotiations," Mr. Baz said. "That also signifies that the negotiations will suffer a serious setback, which will trouble everyone."

"So we think that Israel will change its position and conform with its commitments regardless of the arrival of a new government," he added. Mr. Netanyahu under Arab pressure ahead of Egypt trip.

As Mr. Netanyahu prepares for his Cairo visit, he is starting to face mounting

pressure over Middle East peace moves from Israel's Arab neighbours.

"We are viewing (the trip to Cairo) it as a get-acquainted visit aimed at convincing Egypt that a confrontational attitude will not advance the peace process," Mr. Netanyahu's spokesman Michael Stoltz told Reuters on Wednesday.

"We also want to express that we intend to implement the Oslo accords as long as terrorism does not accompany implementation," he said.

Palestinians hope that Mr. Netanyahu, who maintained an unbending stand during his first trip to Washington last week, will soften his views when he meets Mr. Mubarak.

"The Palestinian side is waiting, as it had been promised by the Israelis, for the resumption of the negotiations after Mr. Netanyahu finishes forming his government," chief Palestinian negotiator Mahmoud Abbas said.

"We, however, feel very worried when we hear that there is procrastination so as not to return to the negotiations table," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu has ruled out talks with Palestinians on the future of Arab East Jerusalem and with Syria on an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights. He has also vowed to build new Jewish settlements on Arab land Israel seized in 1967.

Jordan has expressed uneasiness over Mr. Netanyahu's hardline stance.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti met with Mr. Mubarak and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa separately in Egypt on Tuesday, before flying to Israel for an unscheduled meeting with Mr. Netanyahu.

"Mr. Netanyahu's statements worry us a lot especially when it comes to issues related to Jerusalem and to settlements,"

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King leaves for London, meets Sheikh Zayed in Geneva

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein left for London Wednesday on a several day working visit, where he will hold talks with senior British officials on the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations.

On his way to London, the King made a short stop in Geneva where he met with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan.

Officials declined to say if there was a political purpose to the visit.

The King is accompanied on his visit by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, Prince Hamzah Ben Al Hussein, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh, King's Military Secretary Prince Talal

Ben Mohammad and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff armed forces Field Marshal Abdul Hafiz Mirai Kaabneh.

The King was seen off at the airport by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Royal family members, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Sa'd Hayel Srour and the first deputy speaker of the Senate along with ministers and senior officials as well as the British Charge d'Affaires and the Swiss Ambassador to Jordan.

Prince Hassan was sworn in as Regent before the King's departure.



JERASH FESTIVAL OPENS: Jordanian volunteers hoist the Jerash festival flag at the opening ceremony of the annual culture and arts event. 24 countries are participating in the festival (photo by Yousef Al 'Allan, see story on page 3).

Kabariti assured of Israel's commitment to peace

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti was upbeat Tuesday after meeting with Benjamin Netanyahu, saying he received assurances Israel's new right-wing government will honour commitments to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and pursue regional peace.

"I sense that there is a sincere commitment from Prime Minister Netanyahu when it comes to making peace," Mr. Kabariti told reporters after a 1-1/2 hour meeting — the first by an Arab leader with Mr. Netanyahu since he took office three weeks ago.

The unexpected late-night meeting came amid a flurry of diplomatic activity two

days before Mr. Netanyahu's planned visit to Egypt for talks with President Hosni Mubarak.

Earlier Tuesday in Cairo, Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Kabariti also met separately with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Sharaa — suggesting Egyptian-Jordanian mediation efforts to restart Israel's stalled peace talks with Syria.

Mr. Netanyahu said that Mr. Mubarak has "an important role, not only in leading the Arab World, but also in seeking to cement and broaden the circle of peace."

Mr. Netanyahu's hard-line stands have created concern about the future of the peace process. Arab leaders

warned that Mr. Netanyahu's stated opposition to trading land-for-peace was unacceptable.

But a smiling Mr. Kabariti said Mr. Netanyahu assured him Israel "will respect the (Israel-PLO) agreements that were signed, and I think that this is fair enough for the time being."

"We both feel that we are committed to the agreements signed by Israel and Jordan, the agreements (with) the Palestinians, the Egyptians, and we hope that others will follow very soon."

"I had a very cordial and frank discussion with Prime Minister Netanyahu and we were very pleased that there are so many issues that we agree on that they form the

basis for advancing the cause of peace that is in the best interest of both the Arab World and Israel," said Mr. Kabariti.

"I hope very much that the coming trips of Mr. Netanyahu to Egypt and Jordan will be successful and we need (them) to be a success and we believe that (they) will pave the way to resuming negotiations," he added.

In reply to a question on whether his visit to Israel was in coordination with other Arab countries, Mr. Kabariti said: "We in Jordan are concerned about breaking the deadlock (in peace talks) and in the resumption of the peace process because we believe that peace should be comprehensive as Mr.

Netanyahu has said on more than one occasion."

"For the peace to be comprehensive it should be just and balanced and I believe that there is a good chance during Netanyahu's visit to Jordan and Egypt to resume the peace process," added Mr. Kabariti.

He said: "I believe that the chance is good enough for us to be optimistic."

The two leaders would not say whether Mr. Kabariti brought a message from Mr. Sharaa.

Mr. Netanyahu said his visitor had "many important things to say" and thanked him for his insights on the peace process. He did not elaborate on what was discussed in the meeting.

Lower House called for an extraordinary session

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Royal Decree was issued Wednesday summoning Parliament for an extraordinary session starting Saturday, July 20 to discuss a number of draft laws, according to a statement on Jordan Television Wednesday.

The statement said that Parliament, which went into summer recess on April 2, will discuss, among other things, draft laws on Radio and Television Corporation, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the Jordan Press Association,

higher education, customs and taxes, Jordan Agricultural Union, the Artists Association and a host of amendments to existing laws.

Parliamentary sources said that the extraordinary session was expected to last for two months during which only topics specified in the Royal Decree summoning the session can be discussed.

Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour had said that 47 deputies had requested the convening of an extra-

ordinary session of Parliament to discuss and process several draft laws.

Parliament's ordinary session does not start before October.

The Lower House of Parliament has held informal meetings at the Hall of Pictures in the past two months, the last of which was on July 15 when deputies discussed journalistic practices and writings that they said harm the national unity.

Opposition calls for 'peaceful march' to protest price hike

By Mervat Suwadeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A coalition of nine opposition parties and representatives from various public interest groups Wednesday called for a "peaceful march" to be organized next week as part of a campaign against a government plan to "lift" subsidies on bread.

In a statement issued yesterday, the coalition, which blamed government policies for the country's economic woes, also called for a "public economic conference" that would bring together representatives from opposition parties, various public interest groups, the government and economists to draw up an economic reform plan for the country.

"The main problem lies in the government's economic reform plan which has failed so far to improve the deteriorating economic situation in the country," said the statement, which was issued at the end of a three-day meeting between representatives of various parties and public interest groups. "We believe that economic reform can be achieved only through pub-

lic participation in decision-making," it said.

The coalition strongly rejected a government proposal to compensate Jordanians for the rise in bread prices and said it was an attempt to "mislead" people by stating that the decision will not affect Jordanians.

"The government knows that the compensation it intends to pay is not enough and that not all Jordanians will be able to get it. The government is just misleading people," the coalition charged.

Last week, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said his government estimated the average consumption of bread by each Jordanian at 103 kilograms annually which entitles each Jordanian to JD15 yearly in compensation for the difference in prices.

He asserted that Jordanians will "not be affected" since the compensation will be paid for each citizen and that only foreign workers and tourists will have to bear the difference.

His Majesty King Hussein also showed total support for Mr. Kabariti's move in an address to Jor-

dans last week.

His Majesty stressed that the government "was not responsible for the country's economic hardships" and urged Jordanians to accept the harsh economic measures that were "imposed on the Kingdom."

But the government's repeated assurances seems to have failed to ease the popular concern that hike in bread prices could prompt raises in the prices of other commodities.

Wednesday's statement, which called on Jordanians to "resist" the government plan to hike bread prices, said representatives from political parties and groups opposed to the move, will seek audience with Parliament speaker to discuss the issue.

"We will urge deputies to seek a non-confidence vote in the government during Parliament's extraordinary session, which will start Saturday," the statement said.

Islamic Action Front deputies have threatened earlier to seek a non-confidence vote in the government if it carried out its

(Continued on page 8)

Iraq blocks inspectors

UNITED NATIONS (AP)

— Iraqi guards blocked U.N. inspectors from an arms site in the first test of last month's agreement allowing the U.N. teams unrestricted access to all facilities suspected of harbouring banned weapons, officials said Wednesday.

Chief weapons inspector Rolf Ekeus briefed the Security Council on Wednesday about the incident, which diplomats said took place Tuesday.

They said the inspectors tried to reach the site by three roads on Tuesday. They were blocked entirely on one road, which the Iraqis claimed was a "presidential highway."

They were delayed on another and were allowed to pass on a third. Despite finally being allowed to pass, the team decided to call off the inspection because all its members were not allowed to pass.

U.N. spokesman Sylvana Foa said Mr. Ekeus was "disappointed" at Iraq's failure to live up to an agreement reached following a series of stand-offs last month.

Levy says meeting with Arafat could take place in a few days

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said on Wednesday that he could meet with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat within a few days, but he would not be any more specific.

"We are working on it and it will happen. We must establish a framework (for the meeting) so that when we meet nothing will go wrong," said Mr. Levy on Israel Radio, explaining that the two sides needed time to prepare for a meeting.

Such a meeting would be the first between Mr. Arafat and a member of new Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet.

"It's a matter of coordination... maybe (a matter of) days," said Mr. Levy, asked when such a meeting would take place.

Mr. Levy's statement came one day after the Israeli government decided to ease the 19-week blockade of the West Bank and Gaza Strip which has kept tens of thousands of Palestinians from their jobs and restricted the flow of goods.

The decision came two

days before Mr. Netanyahu was to meet with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to discuss the future of Israeli-Palestinian peace-making.

A Palestinian official said Tuesday that Mr. Arafat refused to take a call from Mr. Netanyahu's foreign policy adviser, Dore Gold, who was trying to set up a meeting with the Palestinian leader.

Israeli reports have said a Netanyahu aide would seek to meet with Mr. Arafat before the prime minister's trip to Egypt. The Palestinian official did not say why Mr. Arafat refused to take the call.

The hardline Israeli leader said after his May election victory that he would only meet with Mr. Arafat if it was vital for Israel's security, but that a member of his cabinet, reportedly Mr. Levy, would hold talks with Mr. Arafat soon.

Tuesday's government decision to ease the closure came despite reports this week that Mr. Netanyahu had told the Palestinians he would only lift the restrictions if Mr. Arafat shut

down Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem and took more vigorous action against Islamic militants.

A cabinet statement Tuesday did not give details on how the restrictions would be eased. "The prime minister, the defence minister and the foreign minister decided on a series of steps to ease the closure... in order to alleviate the economic distress of the Palestinians," the statement said.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns welcomed the announcement. He said President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher had urged an easing during Mr. Netanyahu's visit to Washington last week.

"We have long been concerned by the economic suffering of the Palestinian people on the West Bank and Gaza Strip," Mr. Burns said.

"We hope that easing the closure will allow the Palestinians to get back on their feet."

The blockade was imposed Feb. 25 by the previous government of Shimon Peres after the first

of a series of suicide bombings by Islamic militants. The attacks killed 63 people over a period of 10 days, including the four bombers.

Some of the restrictions were lifted in recent weeks, and currently 25,000 Palestinian workers are permitted to enter Israel. In peak times, more than 100,000 Palestinians worked in Israel.

Finance Minister Dan Meridor reportedly believes that Palestinians should be able to work in Israel because of the severe economic conditions in the West Bank and Gaza.

Mr. Meridor and other Israeli officials want to send home about half of the 200,000 foreign workers brought to the country in recent years to replace the Palestinians, said the Yediot Ahronot daily. Some 100,000 foreign workers are in Israel illegally.

Palestinians have said the closure has cost the Palestinian economy at least \$6 million a day in lost wages and exports.

Strike brings Israel to a halt

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel came to a halt on Wednesday when hundreds of thousands of public sector workers launched a general strike over budget cuts by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new government.

"We are striking to tell the government that this nation is united, that its rumblings are real," said the head of the Histadrut Federation of Labour Unions Amir Peretz to thousands of whistle-blowing protesters outside Israel's parliament.

"If they do not come and talk to us, we will not be able to stop the rumblings," Mr. Peretz said.

The ten-hour protest strike, scheduled from 6 a.m. (0300 GMT) to 4 p.m. (1300 GMT) shut down banks, rail and port services, airports, hospitals and public utilities.

The Tel Aviv stock exchange stayed shut one day after shares plunged five per cent on Tuesday, and currency markets were closed. In the business sector, plants affiliated with Israel's manufacturers association went on strike for two hours.

The strike was called to protest at Mr. Netanyahu's decision to cut 3.2 per cent (excluding debt servicing) from the 1997 budget, cuts which critics charge target the poor.

"The unilateral steps which the government has taken sacrifice the workers and weak groups of society," said trade unionist Meir Gatt.

"This is something with which we can't agree and we will fight against it," he said.

Many protesters said they



Angry Israeli workers protest outside the Knesset (parliament) Wednesday as hundreds of thousands of public sector workers launch a general strike over budget cuts. The ten-hour protest strike, which shut down banks, rail and port services, airports hospitals and public utilities, was called in opposition to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to cut 3.2 per cent from the 1997 budget (Reuters photo)

felt betrayed by the Netanyahu government, whose Likud Party draws much of its support from low-income voters. "I voted for this government but now I oppose it," said Dahan Elisha, 56. "Bibi is a bandit," he said using the prime minister's nickname.

"Bibi go home" chanted other protesters.

Oce placard stated wryly, "Bibi promised a computer

to every child..." Histadrut leaders berated the government for sidelining workers when drafting its budget cuts and demanded that they be made partners to economic decisions.

"We want to tell the new government that its one-hundred days of grace does not mean one-hundred days of quiet," said Mr. Peretz.

"These are one-hundred

days in which we expect you will speak with us...No one is more responsible for the Israeli economy than the workers," he said.

The Histadrut represents over one million workers and is controlled by the opposition Labour Party.

Earlier this month the Labour federation organised a one-hour general strike to protest plans to privatise state-owned com-

panies.

Mr. Peretz said that Wednesday's strike was a warning shot to the new government and that future strikes would be much graver if the Histadrut is ignored.

"The government should know that the next battle will have no time constraints...We will return, united, full of strength," Mr. Peretz said.

Turkish hunger strikers close to death

ANKARA (R) — Several left-wing militant prisoners in Turkish jails are close to death after two months of a mass hunger strike to protest at prison conditions, human rights activists said on Wednesday.

"We have warned the justice minister that deaths could begin in a couple of days if measures aren't taken," Husnu Ondul, general secretary of the Human Rights Association (IHD), told Reuters. He said the bodies of three prisoners, two in Ankara and one in the western city of Bursa, had begun to reject drinks of water in a sign that they were close to death. Others were in a poor condition, he said.

More than 300 prisoners from different far-left groups were on hunger strikes at 33 prisons throughout the country, he said.

Supporters of the hunger strikers have staged demonstrations in Turkey and several Western European cities.

Around 1,500 Kurdish rebel and leftist inmates began the strike in May but the Kurds ended their protest after new Justice Minister Sevtik Kazan promised to improve jail conditions earlier this month.

But the left-wingers have continued. They demand that fellow leftist inmates be transferred from a high-security jail in the city of Eskisehir where they say prisoners are maltreated.

NEWS IN BRIEF

S. Arabia beheads man for murder

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia beheaded a Saudi man on Wednesday for killing a young boy, raising to 15 the number of people executed by the sword in the conservative kingdom this year. An interior ministry statement, read on state television, said the man was convicted of killing the boy by hitting him on the head then throwing him from a balcony of a building. It did not say what floor. It did not say how old the boy was, but the word it used in Arabic indicated he was under 10 years old. Saudi Arabia executes convicted rapists, murderers, drug smugglers and other criminals under its strict Islamic Sharia laws.

Algerian court sentences man for fraud

PARIS (R) — An Algerian court sentenced the treasurer of a regional office of a company that operates a state-run shopping centre to five years in prison for fraud, the official news agency APS reported on Wednesday. It said the criminal court in Blida, a garrison city 50 kilometres from Algiers, found the man, who was not named, guilty of diverting public funds for his personal use. APS on Tuesday quoted the information department of the court in Blida as identifying the man as an official of state-owned oil and gas firm Sonatrach. It issued a correction on Wednesday saying the court circular made a mistake and the man worked as treasurer for another state-run company. The agency said the court had apologised to Sonatrach for the error.

Welfare urges secret debate on Iraq patrols

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's ruling Islamists have requested a closed-door parliamentary debate on the future of a Western allied air force that patrols the skies of northern Iraq from a base in Turkey. Islamist officials said on Wednesday. Islamist Welfare Party officials said their leader, Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, had asked parliament's speaker on Tuesday to hold a closed session on the force, known as Operation Provide Comfort. U.S., British and French planes have shielded Iraq's Kurds against possible attack by Baghdad since shortly after the end of the 1991 Gulf war. The planes are based at Incirlik, southern Turkey. But many Turkish MPs, who vote later this month on whether to extend the force's mandate, say the force helps Kurdish rebels fighting Ankara to establish themselves in north Iraq.

Group: 40 militant prisoners flogged

CAIRO (AP) — A human rights group charged Wednesday that Egyptian prison authorities flogged 40 inmates after a surprise search of cells turned up banned items — a watch and part of a ballpoint pen. The beatings took place June 17 in a high security prison at Tora — locally referred to as "The Scorpion" — that houses an estimated 320 men, most of them suspected Muslim militants. Mohammad Monieh, secretary-general of the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights, told the Associated Press the group had heard of criminals being flogged in Egyptian prisons "but this is the first time this inhumane action has been taken against political prisoners." Egypt has jailed thousands of people in its effort to end a four-year campaign of violence by Muslim extremists who seek to overthrow the government and replace it with strict Islamic rule. Many are held without charge or trial. The Egyptian government has repeatedly denied allegations it mistreats prisoners.

Iran executes seven for drug trafficking

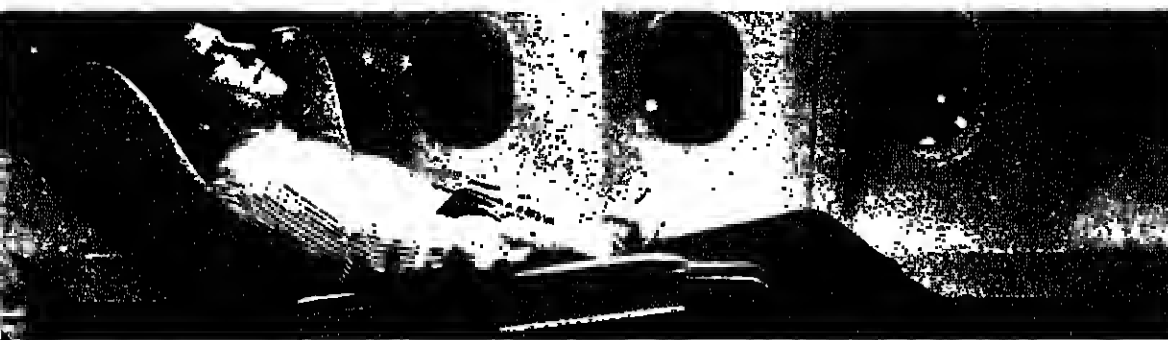
TEHRAN (R) — Iran has executed seven people found guilty of belonging to drug trafficking gangs that carried five tonnes of drugs across the borders, state-run Tehran radio said on Wednesday. It quoted an official at a Tehran revolutionary court as saying the court ruled that the seven unnamed traffickers belonged to international smuggling networks recently broken up by police. Police seized more than five tonnes of opium, heroin and morphine from the networks, the radio said. It did not say when or where the executions took place. Iran said it had seized 22 tonnes of drugs in three months until June 20, a haul 20 per cent higher than the same period last year. Possession of 30 grammes (just over an ounce) of heroin or five kilograms (11 lb) of opium is punishable by death in Iran. More than 1,000 people have been executed in drug-related cases since the law took effect in 1989.

Head of U.S. Fifth Fleet takes over

DUBAI (R) — Vice-Admiral Thomas Boulton Fargo on Wednesday took over as commander of U.S. naval forces central command and the U.S. Fifth Fleet operating in the Gulf. A statement from the central command in Bahrain said Vice-Adm. Fargo replaced Vice-Adm. John Scott Redd who had served as commander for 22 months. Over the past two years, Vice-Adm. Redd's forces participated in seven operations, including the withdrawal of U.N. forces from Somalia and Operation Vigilant Warrior, a rapid mobilisation of forces to deter "renewed Iraqi aggression," the statement said. Vice-Adm. Fargo served as director of assessment division at the office of chief of naval operations in Washington.

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AUSTRIAN AIRLINES

Tajikistan closes border with Afghanistan for fear of armed opposition

DUSHANBE (R) — Tajikistan has closed its border with neighbouring Afghanistan, fearing a build-up of the Central Asian nation's armed opposition, a Tajik government spokesman said on Wednesday.

During the four-year civil war in the remote, mountainous country, which has cost tens of thousands of lives, Islamist guerrillas fighting Tajikistan's pro-Moscow government have operated out of bases in northern Afghanistan.

"The government of Tajikistan from July 16 has closed all border points and is reviewing relations with all countries which provide support for the armed opposition," Zafar Saidov,

spokesman for Tajik President Imomali Rakhmonov, told Reuters by telephone.

Mr. Saidov did not name other countries helping Tajik rebel forces. But much of the opposition leadership is now based in the Iranian capital Tehran.

"The government is seriously concerned about the military preparations within the armed wing of the opposition," Mr. Saidov said.

United Nations-sponsored peace talks are under way in the Turkmen capital Ashgabat. But a U.N.-sponsored ceasefire is in tatters after continued fighting over the disputed town of Tavildara, east of the Tajik capital.

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PROGRAMME TWO
15:00 Double Dragon (Cartoon)
15:30 The Pirates
16:10 Olympia
17:00 News flash
17:02 Children's Programme — Les Pollards
17:30 Varieties — Les Monde Est A Vous
19:00 News in French
19:15 Magazine — Ushuaia
19:30 News Headline
19:35 Here's Lucy
20:00 Varieties — Taratara
21:10 Star Trek
22:00 News in English
22:25 Feature Film — "Duel of Hearts"

PRAYER TIMES
04:05 Fajr
05:37 (Sunrise) Duha
12:42 Dhur
16:22 Asr
19:47 Maghreb
21:18 'Isha

CHURCHES
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German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Relative hot weather conditions will prevail during the weekend with temperatures above average by four degrees centigrade and winds northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman 24/36
Aqaba 28/41
Deserts 20/40
Jordan Valley 28/40
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 37, Aqaba 41 Humidity readings: Amman 40 per cent, Aqaba 42 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Wissam Hazzayin 748563
Dr. Mikhles Mazahrah 820425
DeMunther Al Qasbi 779959
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyib 620115
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
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Yacoub pharmacy 649495
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Naiouk pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

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Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
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Khalifeh pharmacy 985417
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Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
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Radio Jordan 774111
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Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
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Queen Alla Intl. Airport 08-53200

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Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
Akkleh Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muasher 77101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alla Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
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Zarga National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
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Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
08:15 Sanaa (RJ)
09:15 Dhahran (add) (RJ)
10:05 Riyadh (RJ)
10:20 Beirut (RJ)
10:30 New Delhi (RJ)
10:35 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
11:00 Colombo (RJ)
17:30 London (RJ)
17:30 Casablanca (RJ)
17:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
19:00 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
19:15 Athens (RJ)
20:00 Al 'Ain, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
20:25 Rome (RJ)
21:15 Moscow (RJ)
01:15 Larnaca (RJ)

Other Flights
06:30 Tel Aviv (LY)
13:40 Doha (GF)
14:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:40 Sharjah (AH)
20:35 Cairo (MS)
20:55 Paris, Damascus (AF)
21:10 Beirut (ME)
23:20 Istanbul (TK)
23:25 London (KJ)
23:40 Amsterdam (KL)

03:00 Rome (AZ)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights
09:50 Aqaba (RW)
19:45 Tel Aviv (RW)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
10:50 Moscow (RJ)
11:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:25 Abu Dhabi Al 'Ain (RJ)
12:15 Amsterdam, Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:15 Rome (RJ)
12:15 Moscow (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:10 Paris (RJ)
13:20 Athens (RJ)
13:25 London (RJ)
20:45 Larnaca (RJ)
21:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:30 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
23:30 Jeddah (RJ)

Other Flights
07:25 Tel Aviv (LY)
07:45 Beirut, London (BA)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
14:30 Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)
15:30 Riyadh (SV)
15:30 Algiers (AH)
21:25 Cairo (MS)
23:55 Damascus, Paris (AF)
00:40 Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)

04:00 Rome (AZ)
06:00 Istanbul (TK)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights
10:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
20:30 Aqaba (from Tel Aviv) (RW)

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Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

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Cauliflower 230/140
Cucumber (large) 130/60
Cucumber (small) 220/130
Eggplant 190/140
Garlic 650/400
Lemon 630/400
Marrow (large) 250/150
Marrow (small) 440/250
Mulukhiyah 120/80
Onion (dry) 130/80
Okra 700/500
Orange 400/300
Plum 350/250
Peach 500/300
Pea 670/400
Pepper (hot) 300/200
Pepper (sweet) 300/200



Her Majesty Queen Noor V... of the 15th Jerad... (Al 'Allan)

Queen Noor the 15th J

AMMAN (R) — The 15th Jerad Festival of Culture and Arts, officially opened Wednesday with the lighting of the torch by Her Majesty Queen Noor at the historic Jerad city, a Royal Court... The Jerad Festival, which is characterised by an unprecedented participation of Arab groups and... will feature, according to festival Director Masarweh, traditional classical Arab songs, "aghani al-turath", such as "Mudallal of Syria", "Layla of Egypt", "Layla of Morocco" and the Moroccan "Andalus" group for Andalusian music. The performing this year will be renewed Arab groups such as Majda Karam, Nayya Karam and Layla Fakhri, who are celebrated festival veterans with regular shows that are rarely sold out.

Princess R youth conf

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Princess Rahma Bint Al Hassan Wednesday left for Italy to represent HRH Queen Princess Hassan at the first Euro-Mediterranean Regional Conference of the International... The Princess will deliver a address at the conference, chaired by Prince Charles of the United Kingdom, highlighting the role of youth in Jordan and the role of the Crown Prince Award in developing the youth sector. The young Jordanian... holders of the Crown Prince Golden Award are taking part in the four-day meeting in which delegates from Germany, Bel-

Prime Minister Abdul Karim... the agency's establishment. A (Petra photo)

WS IN BRIEF

beheads man for murder

Saudi Arabia's religious police has beheaded a man for murdering his wife. The man was found guilty of the crime after a trial in a court in Riyadh.

sentences man for fraud

An Algerian court has sentenced a man to prison for fraud. The man was found guilty of defrauding a bank of several million francs.

Secret debate on Iraq pact

Turkey's parliament has held a secret debate on a proposed pact with Iraq. The debate was held in a closed session of the Grand National Assembly.

militant prisoners fled

A number of militant prisoners have fled from a detention facility in Jordan. The prisoners were held in a facility in the north of the country.

seven for drug trafficking

Seven men have been charged with drug trafficking in Jordan. The men were arrested by the Jordanian police while attempting to smuggle drugs across the border.



Her Majesty Queen Noor Wednesday prepares to light the torch of the opening of the 15th Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts (photo by Yusef Al 'Allan)

Queen Noor opens the 15th Jerash Festival

AMMAN (J.T.) — The 15th Jerash Festival of Culture and Arts officially opened Wednesday with the lighting of the torch by Her Majesty Queen Noor at the centre of the historic Roman city, a Royal Court statement said.

The 1996 Festival, which is characterised by an unprecedented participation of Arab groups and artists, will feature, according to festival Director Akram Masarweh, traditional classical Arab singing "aghani al-turath" by Sabri Mdallal of Syria, the Zaghloni Al Damour choir for popular Lebanese zaghali and the Moroccan Wajdah group for Andalusian muwashshat.

Also, performing this year will be renowned Arab singers such as Majda Rumi, Najwa Karam and Sabah Fakhri, who are seasoned festival veterans with popular shows that are invariably sold out.

Theatre is making a strong come-back at Jerash this summer with a variety of open-air plays that include the Paris-based Global Cultural Institute's "Julia Dumna," the British Oddssocks' "Richard III" and the Jordanian Artists' Association's "Medea."

Music fans will enjoy performances by the French Children's Choir, the Spanish guitarist Miguel Angel Cortes and the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra.

Activities for children are plentiful, and range from plays and musical performances to book fairs and art exhibitions.

Another popular attraction is the handicrafts and arts exhibitions at the Colonnade Street and the Zeus' vault respectively, which will comprise the work of artisans and artists from the United Arab Emirates, Palestine, Tunis and Jordan.

Also, following the precedent set by last year's festival, the events will not be confined to Jerash itself. The most notable include the dinner-musicals by the Polish opera singer Urszula Kryger and the Portuguese Chamber Orchestra at Umm Qais and Ajlun Castle respectively and the Lebanese Caracala dance troupe at the Palace of Culture.

The poetry evenings, during which more than 50 poets from 11 Arab countries will read from their works, will be launched at Jerash and then continue at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation's Darat Al-Funun in Jabal Weibdeh.

According to the statement, members of the Royal Family, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kahariti and Mrs. Kahariti, the governor and mayor of Jerash and members of the festival's Higher National Committee accompanied Queen Noor to the opening.

Princess Rahma to address youth conference in Malta

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Princess Rahma Bint Al Hassan Wednesday left for Malta to represent HRH Crown Prince Hassan at the first Euro-Mediterranean Regional Conference of the International Award.

The Princess will deliver an address at the conference, chaired by Prince Edward of the United Kingdom, highlighting the status of youth in Jordan and the role of the Crown Prince Award in developing the youth sector.

Six young Jordanian men, holders of the Crown Prince Golden Award are taking part in the four-day meeting in which delegates from Germany, Belgium, Ireland, Israel, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United Kingdom are participating.

The conference seeks to engage the participating countries in a discussion of the criteria and the regulations of the international award within the regional concept and is designed to enable the delegates to discuss the role and duty of the regional councils of the award, and exchange expertise and experiments helping them to launch regional training programmes.

Princess Rahma is expected to deliver her address on the second day of the conference which will be dedicated to youth affairs and their role in society.



HRH Princess Rahma Bint Al Hassan



Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kahariti Wednesday visits the Jordan News Agency, Petra, to congratulate its officials and staff on the 27th anniversary of the agency's establishment. At centre left is Petra Director Abdullah Utoum (Petra photo)

Minister says role of NAF should be backing family projects

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Amman — Minister of Social Development Hamad Abu Jamous Thursday said that the role of the ministry after establishing the National Aid Fund (NAF) lies in backing family projects, as well as private and group ones.

Furthermore, Mr. Abu Jamous said, in order to fulfil its role the ministry needs to coordinate with official, local, and foreign authorities, as well as the presidency of the Higher Council of Social Assistance and Protection which incorporates all national funds for development, employment and the Zakat fund.

The minister stressed that the problem of poverty is one which demands official and private concentration of efforts in order to deal with its negative repercussions on the society, and to create work as well as rehabilitation programmes providing special care for the underprivileged.

The ministry, Mr. Abu Jamous said, has created a new policy for diminishing the effects of the problem by collecting all necessary data from the information centre at the NAF, and using it to plan for future developmental projects which would involve underprivileged citizens, urging them to work, and helping them towards self-reliance.

Also, Director of Public Policy Information at the Ministry of Social Development Khalil Banna said several organisations, including the NAF, Noor Al Hussein Foundation, the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development, and specialists from different ministries have developed a new strategy under which family spending is broken-down into: 51.2% for food, 25.1% for housing, 9.5% for clothing, 1.7% for education, 3.1% for health care, and finally 9.4% for transportation.

Mr. Banna added that there are more than 40,000 Jordanian families receiving 44 JD each in the form of aid from the Social Aid Network, and that coordination among different social funds and organisations, although important, is not enough.

He declared that such coordination should lead to the creation of a social credit and loan corporation which would have clear and concise policies towards the poverty problem.

Furthermore, he said, the establishment of such a corporation will reduce the anguish that the underprivileged experience in their search for financial aid, while, regulating the process of aid and lending. Such a specialised corporation, he added, would be a strategic move on the part of Jordan as there would be less waste of effort and financial resources.

Mr. Banna also said, that poverty can not be entirely eradicated but it can be reduced by job creation and consolidating the value of human resources in traditional handicrafts and agricultural spheres.

As such, said Mr. Banna, the problem of poverty could be dealt with while allowing for principles such as social equality to flourish and help in raising the quality of life for the underprivileged.

Investors demand more from industrial city

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In Ramtha, Al Hassan Industrial City investors Wednesday presented demands to the Jordanian Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) for improved infrastructure services so that more investors would be attracted to the commercial facility.

Spokesman for the investors committee Hussein Obeidat told JIEC Director General Assem Hindawi that the investors' demands included that hangar rents be reduced, annual rents be payable in six installments, and that running water be constantly supplied to allow factories to maintain a desirable level of production.

Mr. Obeidat said that arrangements must be made to ensure better transportation for employees of the various enterprises, and that civil defence, customs, and police officials be stationed at the industrial city.

He added that for the protection of the environment, local authorities should take measures to help the city safely dispose of waste.

He said that by meeting these requests, the JIEC will be creating a favourable climate for investors to come to Jordan, and for the industrial city to improve its production and the quality of its goods.

In response, Mr. Hindawi announced that the JIEC was in the process of purchasing a plot of land adjacent to the industrial city in a bid to expand the industrial area and offer incentives to more investors.

At the meeting, which was attended by Ramtha District Governor Sameh Majali, Mr. Hindawi said the JIEC was determined to help the factories solve all problems facing them.

He said that the Al Hassan Industrial City should cooperate with the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), in order to improve the quality of goods, adding that the JIEC was currently working with JUST to expand and develop the city's services.

The Al Hassan Industrial City was established in 1991 and currently accommodates more than 60 industrial investment projects and factories.



HRH Princess Basma Wednesday meets with the visiting DACOWITS delegation at the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (Petra photo)

Princess Basma introduces visiting DACOWITS team to QAF projects

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A visiting delegation representing the American Defence Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) Wednesday were briefed by HRH Princess Basma on the work of the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF) and its social and economic services to the local communities.

The Princess outlined QAF's efforts through its 50 offices to initiate income-generating projects for women in rural regions of Jordan and help them market their products and improve their families' income.

Princess Basma reviewed with the guests the various achievements accomplished by Jordanian women in political, economic and social fields in the public and private sectors.

She also outlined the stages for the creation of the National Committee for Jordanian Women which handles women's affairs and tries to promote Jordanian women's role in the public sector.

The Princess referred to last year's municipal council elections which resulted in the success of the first woman mayor and the election of 10 others as municipal council members.

Among those present at the briefing were HRH Princess Aisha Bint Al Hussein, a major in the Jordanian Armed Forces and head of its Directorate of Women's Affairs, Farah Daghestani, Princess Basma's adviser on women's affairs, and Princess Basma Bint Ali.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Jerash Festival

- Concert by Lebanese singer Majida Al Roumi at the South Theatre on Thursday and Friday at 8:30 pm.
- Play entitled "Richard III" by the Oddssocks at the Colonnade Theatre on Thursday and Friday at 8:30 pm.
- Performance by the Jordanian National Band for Popular Music at the South and North Theatres on Thursday and Friday at 8:30 pm.
- Performance by the Jordanian Armed Forces Musical Band, Agaba Band for Popular Art, Karameh Youth Centre, the Alia Band for Popular Art, the Ramtha Band for Popular Art, and the National University Band at the Main Theatre on Thursday and Friday at 8:30 pm.
- Children's play entitled "Rahma and the Lost Stick" on Thursday and Friday at 7:30 pm.
- Performance by Jordanian artist Sabah Hattar at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:30 pm.
- Performance by Polish pianist Katarzyna Lisowska at the Royal Cultural Centre on Friday at 8:30 pm.

REIMS

- "The Day After Tomorrow" at Reims Cinema, Amman on Thursday at 8:30 pm.
- "The Wind Blows" (The Sun Peeking Out) at the American Center on Thursday at 8:30 pm.

WALFZ

- Evening of Waltzes (16 waltzes) at Abdullah II Al Hussein Square, opposite the Prime Ministry on Thursday at 8:30 pm.

EXHIBITIONS

- Muslims in Britain Exhibition at the British Council, until July 24.
- Abstract (plastic) art by Samir Sabri and Naim Awambeh entitled "Peace in the Eyes of the Youth" at the Royal Cultural Centre, displaying works on national heritage by 11th and 12th century artists, until July 18.

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Chechen rebels blame Russian troops for attacks on civilians

MOSCOW (R) — Chechen separatists accused Russian troops Wednesday of carrying out attacks on civilian targets in the rebel region as both sides planned separate meetings to plot further action.

Russia's state commission on Chechnya, chaired by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, was due to meet in Moscow to discuss the situation in the breakaway region.

Two Russian generals who have taken a tough line on Chechnya — Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, commander of Russian troops in Chechnya, and Interior Minister Anatoly Kulikov — will address the meeting in Moscow, Interfax News Agency said.

Chechnya, scene of a 19-month conflict in which more than 30,000 combatants and civilians have been killed, has been hit by renewed fighting after nearly seven weeks of a shaky ceasefire.

Rebel commanders, who have blamed Russia for launching attacks on several villages and ruining a truce agreed by President Boris Yeltsin and separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, were also continuing their talks in southern Chechnya to work out what to do next, Interfax said.

Rebel spokesman Movladi Udogov meanwhile said Wednesday that two people had been killed and more than 10 injured when Russian planes hit a civilian hospital in the village of Beni some 60 kilometres southeast of the regional capital Grozny.



A column of Russian armour heads south into the Chechen mountains. Troops were fighting a fierce battle with separatist guerrillas around the village of Mekhkety (Reuters photo)

Mr. Udogov, who contacted Reuters in Moscow by telephone from an undisclosed location in Chechnya, said that Russian artillery and warplanes continued to pound the village of Vedeno in pro-rebel mountainous parts of southern Chechnya.

Mr. Udogov said the

whole area had been sealed off by troops and no one was allowed to enter or leave the blockaded zone. Russian military officials in Chechnya have denied rebel reports about deliberate attacks on civilian targets.

For their part they accuse rebels of attacking troops in

violation of the truce agreed by Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Yandarbiyev in late May.

ITAR-TASS news agency quoted the Russian military press centre in Chechnya as saying one serviceman had been killed and nine others had been injured in overnight rebel attacks.

Mr. Udogov said Chechen Chief of Staff Aslan Maskhadov favoured holding back from a resumption of full-scale combat because political means to save the truce have not been exhausted.

The other view, held by field Commander Shamil Basayev, was that the rebels should start delivering "pin-point strikes" against strategic targets in Russia, he said.

Commander Basayev led a daring raid on a southern Russian town last year in which over 100 people were killed.

Mr. Udogov said Mr. Yandarbiyev appeared to lean towards continuing peace talks when the rebel meeting started Tuesday. A final decision would be made Wednesday.

Mr. Yeltsin, who has won a second term in the Kremlin partly on promises to end the unpopular conflict, has not reacted to the latest surge in violence.

Mr. Chernomyrdin, who signed the truce with Mr. Yandarbiyev, told a news conference Tuesday that peace talks would be renewed. But Mr. Chernomyrdin said he was not overly optimistic and vowed that what he called "terrorism" would be wiped out.



Russian soldiers ride an armoured personnel carrier (APC) after claiming victory over Chechen separatist guerrillas in a battle for the mountain village of Mekhkety (Reuters photo)

Dole picks abortion rights supporter as keynote speaker at convention

WASHINGTON (AP) — Trying to reach out to female voters and transcend bitter Republican differences over abortion, Bob Dole has picked a New York congresswoman who supports abortion rights to deliver the keynote address at next month's Republican convention.

And speaking to the National Governors Association Tuesday, Sen. Dole blamed conflicting White House signals for a rise in marijuana and LSD use by young Americans.

During the Clinton administration, marijuana use among those aged 13-14 has increased 145 per cent and that LSD use among high school students has doubled, Sen. Dole told the meeting in Fajardo, Puerto Rico.

Sen. Dole's selection of Rep. Susan Molinari was questioned Tuesday by a leader of religious conservatives. Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition, cautioned the prospective presidential nominee against turning his back on conservatives.

"Our concern is that all the names that are being publicly circulated both as speakers and as prominent

vice presidential contenders are either pro-choice or moderates," Mr. Reed said in an interview.

But Senate majority leader Trent Lott called the selection "a great choice."

"We want to win the election," Sen. Dole said in a joint appearance with his wife, Elizabeth, on CNN's "Larry King Live" Monday night.

Sen. Dole himself has a long record in opposition to abortion. But he has advocated tolerance among Republicans for those with rival views on the divisive subject.

Ms. Molinari, who called the show from a restaurant in Buffalo, said her selection was a complete surprise. "I'm delighted," she said.

Sen. Dole also announced during the hour-long interview that his proposed economic package — to be unveiled by month's end — would include a tax cut. He did not say how large.

On the subject of a running mate, Sen. Dole acknowledged that his campaign had done a preliminary interview with Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge, who has emerged as a first-tier prospect.

Asked by Mr. King whether any women were under consideration, Sen. Dole replied: "Yes, obviously."

And, while Colin Powell appears to have taken himself out of vice presidential consideration, Sen. Dole said the retired general remains a top prospect for a possible Dole administration cabinet post.

Sen. Dole's selection of Ms. Molinari came as he tried to bridge internal Republican differences on abortion. He has also said he would consider an abortion-rights supporter as his running mate. At the same time, Sen. Dole last Friday bowed to pressure from religious conservatives and abandoned an effort to soften the party's anti-abortion plank. Instead, he proposed new "tolerance" language elsewhere in the platform.

Sen. Dole conceded he was behind Mr. Clinton, "no doubt about it."

He blamed it partly on the fact "we don't have any money. We can't do any advertising" until the general election. And he said he was trailing by 10 to 12 points — not by the 20-or-so percentage-point margins of some recent polls.



Tom Ridge, governor of the key election state of Pennsylvania, is the latest prospect as the vice-presidential runningmate for presumptive Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole. Mr. Ridge (right) and Bob Dole talk at the Philadelphia International Airport after a June 1996 campaign swing through Philadelphia (Reuters photo)

Clinton aide denies Whitewater allegations

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (R) — Senior White House aide Bruce Lindsey Tuesday denied allegations he conspired illegally to conceal large cash withdrawals by the 1990 campaign to elect Bill Clinton as governor of Arkansas.

Mr. Lindsey, one of Mr. Clinton's closest friends and treasurer of the 1990 campaign, testified in a Whitewater-related trial that he "at no time" requested that more than \$50,000 in cash withdrawals be concealed from the Internal Revenue Service.

Whitewater prosecutors have named Mr. Lindsey an unindicted co-conspirator in the trial of two Arkansas bankers, claiming he urged them not to file Currency Transaction Reports (CTRs) required by the IRS when more than \$10,000 in cash is deposited or withdrawn. But he flatly denied the allegations.

"I had no discussion with anyone at the bank about CTRs," he told the trial in downtown Little Rock.

Before entering the courtroom, he said the two cash transactions in question were fully reported by the Clinton campaign. "That's why it makes absolutely no sense to suggest that I would try to keep secret something that I personally and publicly reported," he said.

But he did acknowledge that he took out \$30,000 with four separate checks of \$7,500 each on one day in May 1990. He said that was done to keep Mr. Clinton's political opponents from knowing the scale of the campaign's election-day voter mobilisation programme, which the cash financed.

"I was concerned about leaks to our opponents," Mr. Lindsey told the court.

The two men on trial,

Herby Branscum and Robert Hill, were owners of the rural Perry County Bank and longtime allies of Mr. Clinton. They were accused of deliberately failing to report the cash withdrawals and of filing false expense reports to reimburse themselves and family members for political contributions to Mr. Clinton and other state Democrats.

Prosecutors alleged the two broke the law in a bid to ingratiate themselves with Mr. Clinton. After he was reelected in 1990, both were appointed to influential state commissions.

The prosecution's key witness, former bank President Neal Ainley, testified earlier in the trial that Mr. Lindsey pressured him to keep the cash withdrawals hidden from the IRS.

'Nicotine could be as addictive as heroin'

LONDON (R) — Nicotine acts on the brain in a similar way to drugs like cocaine and heroin and could be just as addictive, Italian scientists said Wednesday. The researchers, writing in the science journal Nature, said their work went some way to refuting claims by the smoking lobby that tobacco was merely habit-forming rather than addictive. The scientists said experiments on rats showed that nicotine stimulated local energy metabolism and the release of the neurotransmitter dopamine in the part of the brain associated with emotional expression. The effects were the same as those triggered by cocaine and heroin and have been linked with addiction, said the scientists from the University of Cagliari in Italy. "Our results are relevant here because they show that nicotine shares with addictive drugs a discrete neurochemical and functional property... This property might itself be critical to the addictive properties of nicotine," they wrote.

Kirk Douglas' son gets 30 days in jail

NEWARK, N.J. (R) — Eric Douglas, the youngest son of movie star Kirk Douglas, was sentenced Tuesday to 30 days in prison for disrupting a flight from California to New Jersey earlier this year. Douglas, 37, also was ordered to pay a \$5,000 fine by U.S. Magistrate Stanley Chesler. Both the jail term and the fine were the maximum permissible by law. Douglas pleaded guilty in June to disrupting a March 17 Continental Airlines flight to Newark from Los Angeles. He let his dog out of its carrier, a violation of federal rules, ignored requests by the crew to cage the animal, was "loudly abusive" and threw rolled-up blankets at flight attendants, an FBI complaint said. The magistrate had revoked Douglas' \$10,000 bail Monday after learning that Douglas had left a detoxification programme that was a condition of his bail.

13-year-old boy charged with murder of girl

LIVERPOOL, England (R) — British police said Wednesday they had charged a 13-year-old boy with the murder of a young girl in a case which has drawn comparisons with one of the country's most chilling child murders. Police in the northwestern city of Liverpool said the boy, who cannot be named for legal reasons, had been accused of murdering nine-year-old Jade Matthews, whose body was found on a deserted railway line early on July 8. The case has aroused memories of the murder of two-year-old James Bulger, who was abducted while shopping with his mother in February 1993 and murdered by two 10-year-old boys on a Liverpool railway line.

Wife beats husband unconscious in divorce hearing

TIRANA (R) — An Albanian man, suing for divorce, was beaten unconscious by his wife in front of a judge, an Albanian newspaper reported Wednesday. The man, identified only as I.V., was the first Albanian husband to file for divorce because he was regularly beaten by his wife, the daily Republika said. He was attacked by his estranged wife minutes after the hearing began and was rushed to hospital for treatment. The judge ended their two-year marriage without delay. The man learned of the decision when he regained consciousness in hospital, the paper said.

Cuba ridicules Clinton move on Helms-Burton Law

HAVANA (R) — Cuba Tuesday ridiculed President Bill Clinton's move to put a Cuba sanctions measure into effect but delay its actual impact for six months, saying all the "supreme empire" had done was grant the world a brief pardon.

Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina said Mr. Clinton had sought to "keep in with both God and the devil" with his decision, adding the move "in no way alters the illegal and interventionist nature of the law."

Mr. Clinton announced he would allow a controversial section of the Helms-Burton Law, Title III, to formally go into effect on Aug. 1.

The section allows lawsuits to be filed in U.S. courts against foreign firms that own or operate properties nationalised from U.S. citizens and firms before the 1959 revolution which brought President Fidel Castro to power.

But Mr. Clinton, under pressure from foreign allies who have strongly criticised this as an unacceptable extra-territorial aspect, said he was suspending the right to file such lawsuits for six months. Mr. Clinton said he would use the time to rally international support for steps to promote democracy in Cuba.

Mr. Robaina, who was quoted by the Cuban news agency, Prensa Latina, said "The only thing that has happened today is that the supreme empire has conceded a pardon to the world and will not violate its (the world's) sovereignty for a period of six months."

Nobody should feel pleased about that, Mr. Robaina said, adding "the world doesn't have to feel grateful to the United States for having conceded a new period of grace on the principle of sovereignty, which has already been trodden on enough."

France, Britain, Spain and Canada all welcomed the six-month delay but said they were disappointed that Mr. Clinton let the law go into effect.

The European Union (EU), said it would continue to retaliate. An EU spokesman noted that European compa-

nies still faced the threat of legal action.

Mr. Robaina said Mr. Clinton was trying to please foreign allies as well as "the Cuban American mafia (hardline Cuban exile critics of Castro's government) and 'ultraconservatives' in Congress."

Mr. Robaina condemned Mr. Clinton's aim of using the six-month period to seek help from allies in pushing Cuba toward democracy. Cuba has long argued that its system is democratic and the minister said this was an effort by Mr. Clinton "to create a holy alliance" against Cuba.

Mr. Robaina reiterated what Cuba has said since the Helms-Burton Law was at planning stages last year — that no amount of fresh U.S. pressure will make it change its system.

Cuban authorities have admitted that the law has already a damaging effect on the economy. But the island would overcome difficulties and would remain an attractive business possibility, he added.

Cuban exiles take moderate view

Meanwhile Cuban exiles had mixed reactions Tuesday to the Clinton administration's decision to suspend implementation of the law.

The powerful Cuban-American National Foundation (CANF) took a moderate view of the administration's decision, praising Mr. Clinton for enacting a law with a strong anti-Castro message.

"We are not completely satisfied, but this is a first positive step," said CANF President Francisco "Pepe" Hernandez, adding that he was pleased the controversial Title III provision will be "the law of the land."

"What the president has done today is really to give investors another few months to make up their minds or pack their bags to get out of Cuba," Mr. Hernandez said.

But Jose Basulto, founder of the exile pilots group Brothers to the Rescue, whose unarmed planes were shot down by Cuban jet

fighters over the Florida Straits in February, condemned the compromise decision.

"This entirely removes the bite out of the law," said Mr. Basulto. "We feel that we have been let down once again by the Clinton administration. If there was any punishment to Cuba it had to do with the implementation of this part of the law."

Under the heading "President Clinton's gelatinous backbone once again exposed," Cuban-American Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart, R-Miami, said in a statement that Mr. Clinton had "succumbed to blackmail" by "unscrupulous interests who are profiting by dealing in property stolen from Americans."

"The president's action today is a dramatic, historic example of appeasement at its worst — it is a demonstration of ultimate weakness by a systematically weak chief executive," he said.

Jaime Suchlicki, a professor at the University of Miami Research Institute for Cuban Studies, said Mr. Clinton had simply postponed his decision until after the November election.

"It's a solomonic decision. He is between a rock and a hard place," said Mr. Suchlicki. "He has to please the Cuban community. He has to please his allies... He is trying to please everybody, but nobody is going to be happy."

Mr. Basulto said it was apparent Mr. Clinton's condemnation of Cuba following the Feb. 24 downing of two Brothers to the Rescue planes by jet fighters was simply a "political reaction."

"It was something they were forced to do, but they didn't mean it and now they think six months later everyone will forget about it," said Mr. Basulto. "But we are not about to forget the deaths."

Palace may face challenge on Diana's status

LONDON (R) — A British newspaper launched a legal campaign Wednesday to regain Princess Diana's royal status and title after she resigned as patron of nearly 100 charities.

The Daily Mirror, a top-selling tabloid, said it had written to Queen Elizabeth the proctor, who represents the monarchy in matrimonial matters, urging him to intervene in the divorce proceedings and restore to Princess Diana the title Her Royal Highness.

"We have asked for a postponement of the decree absolute — due on Aug. 28 — until Princess Diana's royal status is restored," the newspaper said, urging readers to sign a petition.

It claimed Princess Diana's decision to trim her charity work was directly due to the loss of her title and change in status as part of the divorce agreement.

"The Daily Mirror believes that the removal of the title is damaging to the public interest, and goes against public opinion," the newspaper's editor, Piers Morgan, said.

The charities were left shocked and saddened by Princess Diana's surprise announcement, which came just a day after the start of her divorce proceedings from Prince Charles.

The loss of their high-profile, popular patron, who has raised millions for the causes she supports, was a severe setback for many of the organisations.

Few people have the pulling power of the 35-year-old princess or her special talent for comforting the sick and disabled.

"The princess has established such a wonderful relationship with the families of our patients. We don't want to lose her," said Dominic Jenkins of the Ty Hafan Children's Hospice in Wales.



Expert from Bulgaria's Interior Ministry said today under the National Law on speculation on the rate

Bomb explosion

An explosion occurred through the base of Bulgaria's huge National Congress Centre in Sofia early Wednesday. No one was hurt, but damage to the building was significant. A police spokesman said the explosion occurred on the 12th floor of the 15-story building. The cause of the explosion was not immediately clear. The building is a major landmark in Sofia and is used for large-scale events.

N.Ireland talks spread to London, Dublin

SEAFORTH (R) — Talks on Northern Ireland crisis spread to London, Dublin and Belfast Wednesday as efforts to breathe new life into a peace process stalled for years in the region. In London, British and Irish officials met to discuss the situation. In Dublin, Irish officials met with British counterparts. In Belfast, local officials met with British and Irish officials. The talks are part of a series of efforts to bring about a lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

Multi-party negotiations in Belfast continued under the chairmanship of former U.S. Senator George Mitchell, who is leading a peace process. The talks are part of a series of efforts to bring about a lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Mitchell, who is leading a peace process, said the talks were a "positive step" towards bringing about a lasting peace in Northern Ireland. He said the talks were part of a series of efforts to bring about a lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

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MARMOUD AL KAYED

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MORAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

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Monetary policy on the mark

MANY INVESTORS, industrialists, businessmen and even the public at large believe the Central Bank's present monetary policy hinders economic growth and depresses trading and prices at the Amman Financial Market.

The criticism is centred on the high level of interest rates that has been indirectly pushed up by the Central Bank through its issuance of high-yield certificates of deposit (CDs).

This perception is undoubtedly correct and cannot be a contentious issue except when looked at from a national economic security perspective.

The high interest rates are most needed now to support the dinar and encourage the public to shift their foreign currency holdings into Jordanian dinars. Under this monetary policy, the benefits to the national economy include discouraging capital flight and opening the door wider for the repatriation of funds, limiting credit expansion by banks and financial institutions, curbing consumption in order to lower imports and containing, more or less, the inflation from the money supply point of view.

The most important result of this policy is increasing the country's foreign reserves as well as protecting the value of the dinar.

But as cash and funds become dearer and more difficult to obtain, it is inevitable for industrialists and businessmen to see their costs rising and affecting their sales and profitability. Even investments will be affected by high interest rates as local investors would find it more rewarding to deposit their money at banks rather than starting productive projects. Foreign investors could also be discouraged from coming to the Kingdom.

Despite these negative aspects it is of paramount importance to give priority to the strength, stability and sound value of the dinar because without this solid base for our national currency, the whole economic structure of the country will be fragile.

As such, the performance of the stock exchange carries a marginal weight when the issue at stake is the reform of the economy and its sound financial standing. Similarly, complaints by industrialists and businessmen of higher costs, as a result of high interest rates, are unjustified because traders and manufacturers should rely first on their own financial resources before seeking funds from banks and claiming that their costs are rising.

If those high rates are required and necessary to maintain our economic and financial reform on track, nobody should complain, or feel cornered, least of all the government.

After all, whether to lower or raise interest rates is an economic, not a political decision. Since it is almost impossible to predict with any degree of accuracy the economic factors that affect the monetary policy of any country, the politicians should refrain from giving political promises because keeping those pledges ultimately depends on factors beyond the reach of governments.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON the government's decision to lift the subsidy on bread and offer compensation to the Jordanians to offset the difference in price, Al Ra'i daily said that the move was in the right direction since the Jordanians will not feel the difference and that only they will benefit from the new arrangements. Others, like guest workers and tourists, are not entitled to any subsidy and the government's measure is bound to ensure that these sectors will not continue to benefit from the subsidy, said the paper. Indeed, it said, the move was necessary to save the treasury funds which used to benefit non-Jordanians and which are essential to help finance the country's development projects which benefit the Jordanians. Jordan is a country with meagre resources and the subsidies across the board have been partly responsible for the recurring deficits in the country's fiscal budgets, said the paper. What Jordan needs is an austerity programme which will help Jordanians become self-sufficient and self-reliant and enable the country to implement its agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reform the national economy, according to the paper. It said that by keeping the house in order, Jordan can secure continued financial and economic assistance from donor nations and international organisations.

A WRITER for Al Dustour praised the efforts under way by the Jordan Engineers Association (JEA) to train new members of the association and protect their interests by trying to find them employment. Over the past years the JEA had directed its attention to political matters and neglected questions pertaining to the engineering profession, said Mohammad Daoud. The writer said that had the JEA given due attention to the profession and to the engineers' demands and requests, the majority of those unemployed among them would have not faced difficulties in finding jobs, and many of the engineers' grievances and complaints would not have surfaced. By joining a syndicate or professional association, members can hope to benefit from its umbrella, protecting them from arbitrary dismissal from work or other unjust acts they might face in work, added the writer. He said this does not mean that engineers cannot exercise political rights, but this can only be done by joining political parties which abound in Jordan these days.

The View from Academia

Our alumni and our alma mater — the need to bridge the gap

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

AT THE end of every academic year, since 1966 when the University of Jordan graduated its first class, our universities provide society with a substantial number of young men and women in the various fields of specialisation. Though graduation is essentially a time of celebration and rejoice (the end of an exciting period, for both the individual student and the institution), it is also (or should be) a time for soul search and assessment.

Several questions come to mind as our students, who are no longer students, march composedly but excitedly in their neat robes to receive their certificate: the quality of our graduates, the needs of society which such graduates will (or will not) meet, the role they will (or will not) be able to play, and the difference they will (or will not) eventually make, etc.

One thought, a sad thought, that comes to mind as one watches the various classes being called by name is the future linkage — or lack of it, rather — between the graduating students and the mother university and the potential bearing of such linkage on both the concerned individual and the institution itself. I say "lack" and "potential" because there is, as yet, no serious linkage between our graduates, who have become alumni now, and our universities. I have heard that some departments and faculties on our Jordanian campuses have been inviting some of their former graduates to partake in some campus activities. While this is certainly a step in the right direction, there is still a long way to go and much is still needed to create a meaningful relationship between our alumni and our universities.

It is a well-known fact that most universities abroad keep in close contact with their former students. They automatically put their names on mailing lists of all sorts of literature, they welcome and encourage their active participation in various university committees, they facilitate their stay when they come back to visit, and so on. From my U.S. Alma Mater, for example, I receive a quarterly magazine called "Arts and Sciences," which keeps me up-to-

date on the latest news in the College of Arts and Sciences, on the latest publications by faculty members, and on their rewards, awards and activities. The quarterly also contains excellent comments and essays about a variety of subjects, both specific and general.

I also receive a similar magazine which covers news and events at the university level; several periodic publications about major events, happenings, conferences and intellectual meetings and get-togethers both in the U.S. and abroad; and a ballot whenever the time comes to elect new trustees. In addition, the university also arranges annual reunions on campus for graduates of certain years. I revisited the campus twice as a visiting scholar and I enjoyed full benefits: part of an office, library services, campus accommodations, sports facilities, etc.

By contrast, I graduated from my Jordanian Alma Mater almost a couple of decades ago, and until now I have received nothing and participated in nothing (as an alumnus, that is). I do not mean to be critical here, but to point to an obvious gap which we need to fill. I do not think that our Jordanian universities are against keeping in touch with the alumni, and I am sure that they are responsive and helpful to any alumnus who seeks help or assistance from them. For some reason, however, they have not taken yet (to my knowledge) a serious step in the direction of bridging the gap between themselves and their former students. Some may argue that our Jordanian universities are still too young to develop strong traditions such as the one we are talking about, that our financial means do not permit us to take such a step, that we lack the expertise and the manpower to handle such a task, etc. All of this is true to some extent.

Nevertheless, I believe that the time has come for us to build this tradition. The University of Jordan in particular is embarking now, diligently and with great determination, on a package of bold and timely structural and other fundamental changes, in an attempt to bring itself closer to meeting the challenges of the times. This is certainly wel-

come news, and it is time we too started thinking about our alumni seriously.

Let the beginning be humble. Let's, initially, get in touch with the alumni through forwarding to them a quarterly or a yearly newsletter to keep them informed about what is happening on campus. As a second step, we can think about inviting every year or two certain classes of graduates (say the classes of 1966, '67, '68, '69, '70, etc.) for a day or two on campus and plan for them a series of events — get-togethers, meetings, seminars, receptions, etc. At a later stage, and when the tradition gains enough popularity and momentum, we can think of other more creative ideas.

The benefits to be gained are tremendous. Such a step is good to the graduates and good to the university; it enables both to meet half-way and think jointly about ideas, schemes and projects of mutual benefit. Through such a step, the university will be fulfilling an obligation to its own sons and daughters, enabling them to meet again, get reacquainted, pick up or resume more lasting and more fruitful alliances, and relive a past which most of them cherish. The alumni, in turn, will be given the chance to get involved in the various university plans and projects and contribute money and effort. The most generous donations which universities abroad receive come from their alumni. Presently, funds are badly needed in our part of the world, and the alumni can be a valuable asset in this regard.

In my opinion, graduation should not be an end to the relationship between the students and the mother university, as the case is at present, but rather a continuation and a beginning of a very fruitful linkage. It is sad to see our students graduate to separate and disengage. It would truly be heartening to know, at the graduation ceremony, that the bridges which have been built over the four years between our students and our mother universities will be kept wide open.

America does not need big, permanent presence in the Gulf

By William Pfaff

PARIS — There are two possible rationales for a large and permanent American military presence in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. The first is to protect American access to the oil of the region. The second is to protect the proprietors of that oil, the ruling royalty of Saudi Arabia and the smaller Arabian principalities.

Neither rationale withstands examination.

Access to the oil does not have to be defended, since oil has no value to its owners until it is sold. It has to be sold, or left in the ground, no matter who controls it. Withholding it, as the anti-Western OPEC boycott in the 1970s conclusively demonstrated, penalises the seller. The buyer goes elsewhere.

A policy of defending Arab governments and leaders friendly to the West is nonetheless justified, if it can work. Military defence works only against military threats. At present, the threat in these countries comes from inside their own societies, not from the outside.

If an external threat were again to develop, the United States would not need permanent bases in Saudi Arabia to respond. It has at considerable expense to the taxpayer provided itself with an alternative, a huge military projection force to assist allies of clients at risk.

The U.S. Navy can commit five carrier battle groups and the same number of Marine Expeditionary Brigades to any major conflict, and be there within days if not hours. One of its missions is to do this for two such wars at the same time.

The U.S. Army would be slower onto the scene, but is capable of bringing decisive ground force to bear against any nation in the Middle East, as it demonstrated in the Gulf war.

The aircraft at the Dhahran base, where the recent attack occurred, were surveying Iraq in connection with United Nations sanctions on that country. This, too, is a function that can be performed from carriers. The U.S. Air Force itself is developing a radically new range of global surveillance and intervention systems that require no foreign bases at all.

The threat to the Saudi

royal family, as to certain other traditional leaders, comes from within and is to a significant degree generated or exacerbated by the presence of "infidel" foreigners in a kingdom which is the site and protector of the Islamic holy places.

An American policy which undermines the political position of its clients, worsening the problem it is meant to solve, makes absolutely no sense.

I can imagine only two reasons why it was adopted, and why it is persisted in.

The first is the inveterate impulse of bureaucracies, in this case the American military bureaucracy, to expand. The second is that the Pentagon is a more powerful Washington political player than the State Department or the CIA.

The Gulf war put the American military into the Gulf region in a big way, giving them a war to fight and what undoubtedly seemed to the Pentagon a new strategic responsibility in defence of the region's monarchies. The Pentagon's natural institutional reaction was to acquire air bases, deploy forces and greatly enlarge the American connection with the host government and its military and police forces.

There was a choice of political rationales. Certain Washington analysts envisage creation of a new American "empire" in the region, which would more or less annex the oil and its proprietors. Others have a vision of an eventual struggle "of civilisations" between Arabs and the West. In that case, building up forces in the region is prudent preparation.

Israel is an important influence in Washington and wants permanent U.S. military commitment and U.S. bases in the Arabian region, particularly if the Arab-Israeli "peace process" is about to end. If relations between Arabs and Americans also worsen, that will force the United States closer to Israel. Israel's security is enhanced whatever happens.

If the president, his secretary of state and his national security adviser have no particular intellectual grasp of the problem on their own, and if the State Department and the CIA do not put up a serious fight against expanding the U.S. presence in Arabia, then the Pentagon, which has the momentum and clout prevails.

The nature of bureaucracies is to expand, aggrandise their responsibilities and power, and bury their mistakes — or turn

them into arguments for enlarged commitment. This is how the Dhahran attack already is being presented to public and Congress: America can't back down. Mr. Clinton has already said that it would be "a mistake" to change poli-

cy now.

Washington is only capable of changing, it seems, after a policy has completely failed,

and the country.

International Herald Tribune

LETTERS

Constructive criticism

To the Editor:

MY ATTENTION was caught by a passing reference to the inefficiency and incompetence of Royal Jordanian in an article by Dr. Fahed Fank about the intention to abolish the Ministry of Information "Ministry of Information — improve not remove" (Jordan Times, June 23, 1996).

I would like to say that recently I travelled to Jordan and back by Royal Jordanian — largely because the flight cost less than on British Airways, much less. I found out why: the flight took much longer.

I only believe that if more people supported Royal Jordanian, they would have more muscle to compete with the other airlines for a more direct, faster route. True, there was one minor hitch on the way out, which I was told by a fellow passenger "is always happening" — the distribution of the non-smoking seats was muddled; but at least the places of all the non-smokers were changed.

On my return journey my seat was upgraded to business class; I am not sure why, but I suspect it was because I met someone who worked for Royal Jordanian quite by chance.

But best of all, my wheelchair, which was broken from a fall off those extremely high pavements in Amman, left Jordan broken but arrived in London nearly mended.

Shortly after my return I read that Crown Prince Hassan had chaired a meeting to launch the initiative to encourage disabled tourists to come to Amman. The worst thing I found in Amman were the high pavements — even the all too infrequent ramps were high. There is also a real dearth of good, legible, manageable street maps, not helped by the fact that the names that people use do not always correspond to the names on the maps!

To go back to the original article, there was a reply the next day by Amy Henderson, which mentioned censorship of the press. I agree, it is very important that there should not be censorship of the press, which makes a much healthier society.

Margaret Stone,
London E11 6J,
e-mail: sheko@dircon.co.uk

In the shade of palm trees

To the Editor:

YOU HAVE to have lived by the sea to know what it means. You have to know enough about luxury tourist developments like Pation's Las Hadas, sugar pink cottages in the Bahamas and the Agha Khan's Sardinia resort to know what kind of money they attract.

The economy can benefit from the drive to build tourist facilities in Jordan. There is an amazing wealth of historical, cultural and natural offerings for the jaded traveller. However, in our headlong rush towards the time bomb of development perhaps the time has come — now that Petra and Wadi Rum are classed as prime development areas — to define our target traveller. Do we need busloads of cut price tourists or should we cater to the more affluent, and therefore

more discriminating, traveller? Do we want tourists to come in on day trips and perhaps uproot a few black irises to take home, or do we want to seduce people into staying some more and enjoying the Jordanian sejour? Do we want to train enough young Jordanians in the skills required to cater to tourists or do we import half of South East Asia to man countless hotel rooms for the "see Jordan's part of the Holy Land in one day or less" crowd?

Most important — are we destroying what is unique to Jordan... the majestic and timeless beauty of Wadi Rum, the awesome edifices of Petra — silent testimony to the might of civilisations long-gone? And the Hafayir/Middle Beach area of Aqaba?

Sherif Hussein's home was made out of the customs house bordering the shore of the bay of Aqaba, and that was the reemergence of a dynasty we are proud of. Lawrence first reached the shores of Aqaba through those palm trees.

Botanists, biologists, conservationists and investors know the value of that 1.5 kilometres of palm gardens cultivated and irrigated by methods that time has tested from early Yemen and Basra on Shatt Al Arab till today in Aqaba.

People who sit under those palms, at tables set up along the shore where they can have their meal with their feet in wet sand and watch the reflections of the lights of those beautiful ships across the bay, late into the night, can feel the irreplaceable value of that 1.5 kilometres of date palm grove.

The survival of that unique band of historical palm trees and gardens — around Sherif Hussein's house and the castle and the Aya excavations — can be put to some people's business instincts:

Would we like to keep those centuries old palm trees and their underground reservoirs of water as the most beautiful and exclusive of tourist traps and capitalise on the particular nature of those assets to attract hard currency in our only access to the sea or shall we wrap it up with concrete and high rises with badly maintained cracks in the mercilessly sunbaked tracts of piers and neon-lit walkways?

It is understood that, as our only port, Aqaba must serve as a transport and communications centre and an inlet to badly needed industrial projects; however, it is also understood — in this age of increasing public sector accountability to the public — that we will regret the dream of Aqaba that is contained intact.

That complete small jewel of emerald green eco-system that took centuries to happen can be erased into "Third World development" in its worst possible sense by any bulldozer in seconds. No amount of money can recreate that small oasis that time preserved amidst so much heat and dust.

If years from now some sharp entrepreneur gets money to create an Aqaba Zaman, it will be another equivalent to plaster replicas of Petra and Jerash; it will never be the same, only a plastic imitation.

Somehow, transplanting those particular date palms into the Yacht Club and elite housing projects just doesn't compensate us for losing that small stretch of time.

Diala Al Jabri,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

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By Christine Hauser
Reuter

RYADH — Elbagir Ibbad led a captive audience through a labyrinth of jail cells and barred walls into the interior of the Lock-Up in Saudi Arabia capital.

His staff, clad in striped prison uniforms, had seen it all before. They stood impassive and silent, watching the face of the prisoner gazing at the surrounding walls.

Heavy chains dangled from the floor. A gas mask hung from a pipe. Army netting a barred wire were strung across the room and collapsing walls.

"Release me," said big left on the ceiling.

By Elaine Lies
Reuter

OKYO — Naomi doesn't look like she was born in 1946 because she was born in 1946. The Year of the Fiery Horse, Japanese tradition says she is destined to devote her husband and bring bad luck to her family and to any house unclean enough to receive her as a bride.

Certainly this is something that comes up when it's time to get married. You know any prospective husband's family will mention it," said Naomi.

I don't know anyone born in the Year of the Fiery Horse. Many bad things happen to the woman in a little scary," said Naomi.

Modern, high-tech Japan. In some ways a deeply superstitious place. People routinely avoid anything in units of four. f

Friday, July 18-19, 1996
By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubi

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Weekender

Jordan Times, Thursday, July 18, 1996 **A**

Society on the Move

Let's just say they 'know the ropes'

German Ambassador to Jordan Heinrich Reiners and his wife Maria will host a reception next Thursday for officials, associates and friends at the embassy residence on the occasion of the visit of President of the German Bundestag Prof. Dr. Rita Suessmuth and a delegation of parliamentarians, government officials and journalists. But the reception will not only be to celebrate the visit of Dr. Suessmuth, who is, in rank, second only to the German president. Heinrich and Maria Reiners will also take the opportunity to say goodbye to their many friends and associates in Jordan since the ambassador will be heading to Damascus soon to take up his new post there. The visit of Dr. Suessmuth, which takes place at the invitation of Lower House Speaker Saad Hayel Sour, has been pushed up one day to July 21 when Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan and Princess Sarvath will host a dinner in her honour. The Bundestag president's visit to Jordan, which is combined with a visit first to the Ukraine, is the first official visit of a Bundestag president to the Kingdom. Dr. Suessmuth was here last October but as a member of the German delegation attending the Middle East and North Africa economic summit. The delegation will stay here until the 26th and are scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Senate Speaker Ahmad Lawzi and Mr. Sour and are hoping to see His Majesty King Hussein upon his return from his visit to the UK and prior to his meeting in Amman with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The German team will also visit Petra as the guests of Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Saleh Irshaidat. The Reiners are planning to leave Jordan at the beginning of September after more than five and a half years in the Kingdom. Dr. Reiners, a professor of political science with a doctorate in law and a masters degree in Middle Eastern studies, who, also on behalf of his wife and two daughters, describes his tenure here as a very happy one, says that there is consolation in his departure as he will not be living far away. So weekend visits back to Jordan could be frequent. The ambassador entered the German Foreign Service in 1967. He served in Geneva, Baghdad, Kathmandu and the Foreign Office in Bonn and was first appointed an ambassador in 1979 when he was posted to Oman. Dr. Reiners later served in both Sana'a, Aden, and Djibouti. He arrived in Amman in January 1991. Dr. Reiners' successor will be Peter Mende, a career diplomat, now serving as ambassador to Sudan. Mr. Mende is expected to arrive just as Dr. Reiners leaves, and thus, there will practically be no gap in the switch. The Reiners' daughters, Claudia (23) and Katja (21) study in London, but have spent most holidays in Jordan as they are doing now and will be on hand to help with the move to Damascus.

is encouraged to stay longer at it. And that could very well be how Dr. Glade himself would like to consider his decoration. However, the Goethe director is an historian after all, and having spent the last four and a half years at the cultural institute's helm in Jordan, he will not be surprised to be notified of an imminent move. That, he says, could come in three to four months, but more than that, he cannot comment on. So Jordan could yet be saying goodbye to another German friend and awaiting the arrival of his replacement sometime in the fall.



Rita Suessmuth

of medicines, and the total care of diabetics in general. The caller, no less than His Majesty King Hussein, was responding to Mr. Zurikat who had commented that he was unable to contact Minister of Health Aref Bataineh and was urging any officials watching the programme to call the station and join in the discussion. During the brief call, King Hussein asked Dr. Zaheri to conduct a study on diabetic patients who are unable to pay for their medicine and on the possibility of lowering customs on the drug and solving this pressing problem through the office of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Health. Dr. Zaheri, an endocrinologist who completed his specialisation at the University of Massachusetts in the U.S., says he promptly went to work on the King's request and is in contact with the National Centre for Diabetes, Endocrinology and Inherited Diseases and the Royal Medical Services to prepare a study of the problem and propose some immediate solutions. Dr. Zaheri teaches part-time at the University of Jordan Medical School and as three-time president of the JSCD, (since its 1991 establishment), he has a keen respect for emergencies.

premises at the Fourth Circle across from the Prime Ministry, the Dutch embassy worked with InterContinental General Manager Chawki Ayoub in arranging the exhibition, and thus, Mr. Schouten, his wife Inez, and Mr. Ayoub co-hosted the event at the hotel's Crown Room. The documentary delved into a multitude of aspects in the composition, techniques, restoration and appreciation of Vermeer's works including details into his most important themes of music, letters, young women and wine. The son of a silk-weaver, an dealer and innkeeper, Vermeer was born in Delft in 1632, married Catharina Bolnes with whom he had 15 children and was twice chairman of the Delft Artists' Guild. Although the embassy did participate in this year's European film festival, this exhibition, albeit short but sweet, was the embassy's first formal cultural event in Jordan. Perhaps there'll be an encore.

MAKING CONNECTIONS: Siemens-AG Jordan branch, the folks who have been given five years to help bring Jordan's public telecommunications network up to snuff, moved to new offices and threw a party Monday night to celebrate with clients, the biggest of which is the Telecommunications Company, friends, officialdom and the press. The German company, which began its Jordan branch with no more than 15 employees three years ago with a contract to install a 20,000 line switch exchange in Mafrqa Governorate, now boasts a staff of 143 with plans to expand that number to 200 by the end of the year. Most of the technical staff are German as is Managing Director Georg Schmid. Now occupying three floors of their new Shmeisani space in Strand Building No. 1 on Abdul Hameed Sharaf Street, it looks very much like Siemens is here to stay and make its 'mark' from Amman into the region.

QAIA OR BUST: Alia Hotel, the former Alia Gateway Hotel until its conversion into a public company operating on a commercial basis last February, opened its doors Tuesday evening to its new JD 1.3 million renovation along with the launch of its Summer Nights programme with a party by the pool for a guest list that included Minister of Higher Education Abdullah Ensour, and representatives of its major shareholders Royal Jordanian and the Jordan Investment Corporation, along with those fun-loving travel agents, bankers, journalists and patrons. Welcoming the guests was hotel General Manager Nazi Dabbas, who says the summer programme carries on a earlier tradition of the hotel, located just outside the Queen Alia International Airport and serving primarily transit passengers, four groups headed to southern Jordan, airline crews and shipping agents. Dr. Dabbas, who ran the Hotel Training College, which is also coming into private hands, says the month-long activities include Lebanese duo, vocalists Gabi and Selmo every night. "It's part of the hotel's commitment to the society's activities," says the management. So if you can designate a driver, you may yet hit on a new night spot.

Jennifer Hamarneh

STAYING PUT? When His Majesty King Hussein conferred the Kawkab Medal of the Third Order on Goethe Institute Director Dieter Glade last week, "in recognition of his distinguished service in strengthening German-Jordanian relations," some thought Dr. Glade was slated for a change in posting. But Dr. Glade says that some people like to look at such events in reverse, meaning that what such awards signify is that one is doing such a good job one

CALL WAITING: During last Saturday's airing of Jordan Television's Channel One talk-show programme, Muwajaha, (Encounter) host Urwa Zurikat and his guest, Mohammed Zaheri, President of the Jordanian Society for the Care of Diabetics (JSCD), received a call from a concerned viewer. The topics of discussion on the programme were matters of urgency: the difficulty underprivileged diabetics have in obtaining life-saving insulin, the high prices

ONE NIGHT STAND: For one night only Wednesday a documentary exhibition on the 17th century Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer was held under the joint organisation of the Royal Netherlands Embassy and the Hotel InterContinental. The new embassy is being operated by Chorge d'Affaires Jan Schouten until the arrival of an ambassador, still to be named, but expected in early September. Housed temporarily until its move to permanent

'Lock-Up' Jailhouse Cafe is Riyadh's great escape

By Christine Hauser
Reuters

RIYADH — Elbagir Ibbra led his captive audience through a labyrinth of jail cells and pockmarked walls into the interior of the Lock-Up in Saudi Arabia's capital. His staff, clad in striped prison uniforms, had seen it all before. They stood impassive and silent, watching the face of the newcomer gazing at the surroundings. Heavy chains dangled from ceiling to floor. A gas mask hung from a pipe. Army netting and barbed wire were strung across doorways and collapsing walls. "Release me" said big letters on the ceiling.

"I want to break free" said another scrawled message. "This is for the single men," Ibbra, the manager of Riyadh's Lock-Up Cafe, said as he led a reporter into a warren of small jail cells partitioned from the rest of the room by bars. The Lock-Up could very well be seen as Saudi Arabia's attempt at its first theme cafe. But unlike the flashy venues of a Fashion Cafe or Planet Hollywood in the United States and Europe, it must conform to the conservative Muslim kingdom's strict rules on segregating men and women. In a country where alcohol is banned and dating is taboo, restaurants and cafes in Saudi Arabia are usually staid affairs

with separate families' and men's sections. Riyadh's youth needed an outlet of their own where they could socialise while keeping up the appearance of not mixing with the opposite sex unless they were related by blood or marriage. The Lock-Up tried to give it to them — with handcuffs. "This is the most unique coffee-shop in Saudi Arabia," said 24-year-old patron Abdul Rahman Al Baz, who said he preferred traditional Arabic coffee to the Lock-Up's concoction of pears and jack fruit called handcuffs. "I hope all the prisons are like this," Mr. Baz said. On the other side of a cement partition from the single men's

ward, veiled women sipped blue juice and munched onion rings under pink fluorescent lights, which failed to penetrate the shadows of the blackened ceiling and dark walls. Scary ogres glared out at patrons from "wanted" posters painted on the sides of canvas army tents erected to form private rooms. A one-eyed villain was wanted for "killing, stealing, breaking and eating children." A Tina Turner song blared from the sound system. Like any prison, the Lock-Up has signs setting out the house rules. About time: "Open most days about 9:00 or 10:00. Occasionally as early as 7:00. But some days as late as 12:00 or 1:00..."

About which areas are off-limits: "Disaster Area," reads a sign above the kitchen entrance. And about acceptable behaviour: "This is not Burger King. You don't get it your way. You take it my way or you don't get the damn thing." It even warns inmates about the man in charge: "Forget the dog, beware of owner." Lock-Up's 27-year-old owner Abdul Mohsen Saeed said he got the idea for zany theme decorations from his visits to cafes in Europe, New York and Los Angeles. Then "when I went into (Saudi) cafes I used to think

"why don't we care about the decoration in these places?" he said. The cafe opened last September and Mr. Saeed said he was trying to open a similar one in Paris. Mr. Saeed said he built and decorated the four million riyals (\$1 million) cafe on the corner of Riyadh's posh Talateen Street because he thought Saudi youth needed something new. "We don't have here any enjoyment places. We don't have discos," he said. "But you must be careful about the Islamic situation."

Japan's Fiery Horses charge into 21st century

By Elaine Lies
Reuters

TOKYO — Naomi doesn't look like a man-eater. Yet because she was born in 1966, the Year of the Fiery Horse, Japanese tradition says she is destined to devour her husband and bring bad luck and conflagrations to any house unlucky enough to receive her as a bride. "Certainly this is something that comes up when it's time to get married. You know any prospective husband's family will mention it," she said. "I don't know anyone born in that year, but many bad things happen then, so the idea is a little scary," said another woman in her twenties. Ultramodern, high-tech Japan remains in some ways a deeply superstitious place. People routinely avoid giving anything in units of four, for

example, because one pronunciation of that word is a homonym for death. Naomi, and around a million other hapless young Japanese, share the fate of having been born in the unluckiest year of the Japanese zodiac, a 60-year cycle that combines the 12-year animal zodiac of China with the five elements of wood, water, earth, metal (gold), and fire. Adding the traits ascribed to each element yields a detailed, and complicated, reading of each year. The Fiery Horse Year, or "Hinoeuma," has fire as its element, summer as its season, red as its colour, and the horse as its animal. Over time, this came to be seen as a year of fire and calamity, with people born in it strong-willed and occasionally violent, like their animal namesake. In contrast, while 1996 is the "Year of the Fire Mouse" and shares many of

the same properties, possible disaster is neutralised by the timid nature of its guiding animal. "Whenever I have a disagreement with anybody, especially at work, you can always bet that my boss will say, 'of course, you're Hinoeuma,'" Naomi said. Being born as a Fiery Horse is little more than a curiosity for men. Although in some rural areas of Japan they are said to be ridiculous and easily confused, more widespread belief has it that they may be more successful than average. But women were traditionally said to be doomed to a loveless, single life, as Japanese men shied away from marriage to anyone bearing that much bad luck — or that strong a will. "I was always told it was good I was not born a girl, and I think so too. This way I get the notoriety of being Hinoeuma without any of the bad con-

notations," said one man. "The idea really just seems to be that a strong woman is bad, although a strong man is good," said Takanobu "Tony" Oikawa, chairman of the recently-founded Japan Hinoeuma Association. "But now nobody really believes it, it is just something to pin on especially strong women," he added. "My wife is Hinoeuma, and there's nothing strange about her," another man said. Even so, when the dire year last rolled around in 1966, Japanese parents appear to have done their utmost to avoid burdening their children with this stigma. The overall birth rate plunged to around 1.36 million from 1.82 million the year before, then surged to 1.94 million in 1967, according to Japan's Health and Welfare Ministry. It is widely believed that some chil-

dren actually born in 1966 did not have their births officially registered until the next year. Similar, but smaller, drops were seen in the previous Fiery Horse Years of 1906 and 1846. The youngest herd of fiery horses is rebelling against the dark image of their birth. "Because fewer people were born then, I actually feel like some kind of special, limited-edition goods," one man said. Most agreed, noting that their smaller numbers had eased competition in school entrance exams and job hunting. The association's opening meeting, held recently in a computer venue in downtown Tokyo, could hardly have been more modern, or more ordinary. Well-dressed young men and women circulated, drinks in hand, or stopped to exchange names and business cards in time-honoured Japanese style.

Many sat mesmerised in front of computer terminals, surfing the Internet or studying the "Hinoeuma Homepage," ([http://WWW.Butan.or.jp:82/TiIde/Hinoeuma/Index\(SpaceUnderscored\)-E.HTML](http://WWW.Butan.or.jp:82/TiIde/Hinoeuma/Index(SpaceUnderscored)-E.HTML)) which debuted recently in both English and Japanese. Along with historical background on the Japanese zodiac, this features a guide to the entire 60-year cycle, enabling the curious to discover whether they themselves are an Earth Tiger, a Water Rabbit or even, perhaps, a Wood Snake. For Hinoeuma women, the curse seems to be fading. Several used the meeting to announce autumn weddings. "These days, all women are strong. It has nothing to do with what year they were born in," one man said.

RENDEZVOUS WITH ART Entering the art-form

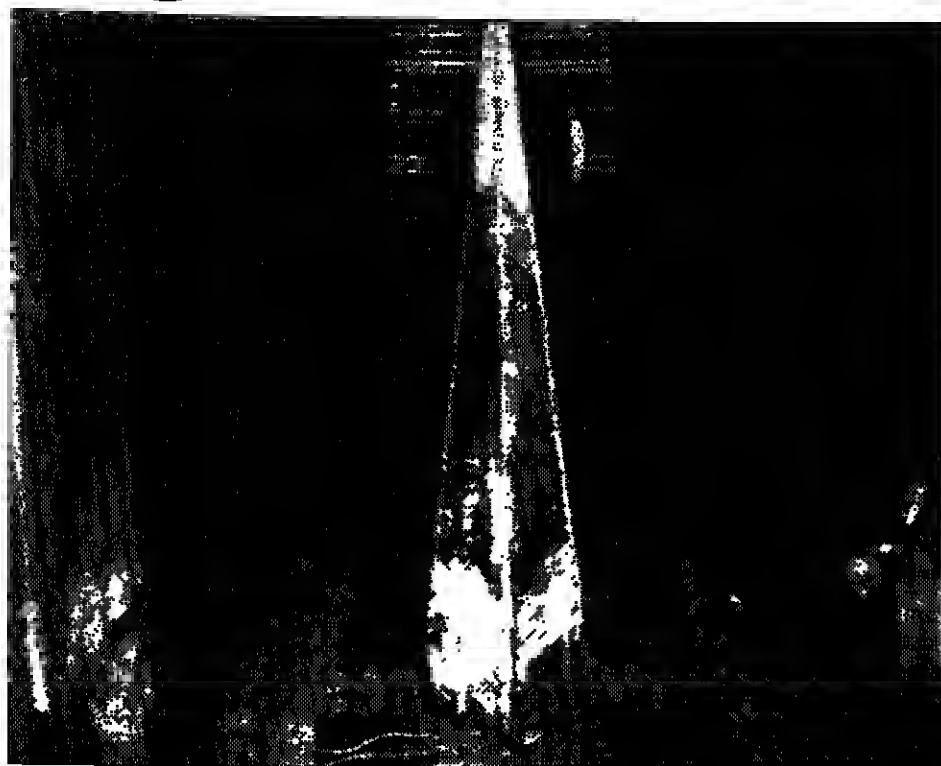
By Mahmoud I. Mufti

IT IS USUALLY assumed that art is for viewing — with meaningful contemplation, granted — but nevertheless for viewing. Some artists and exhibits even allow you to touch the art. With the performing arts, you hear the artist's creativity and, if the event is a live or recorded one, employing some form of retrievable audio-visual medium, you can see it as well as hear it.

It is therefore not the most obvious notion that art — at least traditional art — can be entered or smelled. However, the work of artist Araz Taleb enables the viewer to do just that. All but one of the five thus-discovered human senses are stimulated: Sight, touch, hearing, and smell. Only the taste buds are left uncatered to. And no, we're not talking about holligrams or the 'holi-deck room' aboard the 'Starship Enterprise'. We are, however, talking of a small (barely 2.5m x 3.5m) blacked-out room at the gallery of the Jordanian Plastic Arts Association at Nadim Al-Mallah Street in Jabal Wehdeh.

Entering the small dark room at the side of the gallery's main exhibit hall, one immediately empathises with Jona's predicament when, according to biblical tradition, he was swallowed whole and unharmed by a whale. Equally safe in this room, though free of any abdominal contractions or gastric juices, the viewer draws comfort from the almost cave-like cosiness and lava-coloured light emanating from two-coloured glass pyramids, one of which is suspended from the ceiling with its inverted apex almost touching that of its sister-cone, positioned atop a huge mirror on the floor. The reflection, in the mirror, of both triangles (each starting out with base-parameters of 40cm and thinning out to a height of 1.8m) conjures (up) a startling illusion of a serious 4-meter pit.

Interestingly, several neighbourhood children heard of this 'strange' exhibit and decided to see for themselves. "I like the idea, but frankly, not the place," reacted an eleven-year-old boy, Ahmad Haddad from Nahlus. The 6th grader expounded that "I feel I'm in a secret place in which there's a secret crypt. But I also feel as though I'm looking, or



The chamber (crypt) of artist Araz Taleb

nought to be looking for someone down there. I feel imprisoned and confined there, but not scared, despite the darkness of the place." Pausing a moment and evidently reflecting intently, the youngster added: "I look in there, through the water-like mirror, to the bottom, and its as if I see a spider's web."

The child's penetrating perception and sense of discovery reveals a lot about the exhibit, says the artist. But it's not just the viewer's reaction to the work that is intended here; the viewer metamorphoses into a perceiver and even an interactive part of the exhibit. One becomes inclined to make discoveries about oneself and not just about the surroundings, just as the little boy felt a compulsion to explore and look for someone in there.

By isolating the viewer from most of the elements that are usually considered to be the defining parameters of traditional reality as we know it, he/she experiences a simulation of what it may be like to cross that fine line between consciousness and dreaming. Natural light is taken away, and though the remaining light is artificial, it does not seem so, radiating with warm earth colours from both pyramids' crystalline mediums. A sense of near-infinity is created by the deep reflection in the mirror. The walls of the room, its doors and its ceiling are covered uncompromisingly in black; an uneven shiny black surface (to pro-

vide for uneven reflection and absorption of the available light). The overwhelming feeling is that the concepts of time and place have been suspended to some degree. That's not to say that time is not elapsing inside the chamber; it is. However, the usual variables that usually gauge time, are non-present. Once in, and there loom enough, there is no way of knowing whether it is daytime or night-time out there in the real world. Physical elements like wind, rain, and varying temperature that normally give strong clues of 'seasonal time' are also non-evident. Time is further marginalised due to the very low probability of meeting someone familiar in the chamber who may subsequently betray what time it is by harranguing you to go and do something you should be doing (out there in the real world).

The sense of 'place,' though harder to marginalise, has nonetheless undergone very heavy camouflage with respect to its original state: A bright little room with windows is now a dark, virtually airtight labyrinth. Distinct floor-tiles are now covered with grey wood-shavings. A previously 'town-house' character has been transformed into a rustic, medieval, perhaps even macabre and slightly sinister aura.

Thus, to varying degrees, the sense of time and place appear to have been altered significantly. Add to an atmosphere evocative of an ancient temple, burial chamber or the 'Oracles of Delphi', is the profusion of burning incense and tiny candles like Hobbits' eyes glowing in the eternal dark. The human sense of smell is thus stimulated, in addition to those of touch, and vision. The hearing aspect is likewise stimulated with carefully-placed speakers, releasing seemingly primitive music harking back to the origins of man. But the music is actually that of Peter Gabriel's composition.

Rocks skirting the boundaries of the mirror conceal what would otherwise be a contrived attempt at blending the mirror and the tiled floor. Piled in a rough manner, the rocks accentuate the feeling of the 'pit' below, by giving the impression of earth and rubble dug out of the pit. Small candles also find their natural spot in the many crevices of the rocks, the latter looking like numerous miniature zigzags splendidly illuminated for pagan sacrifices. "The seemingly macabre atmosphere of the exhibit is symbolic of the precariousness and fragility of human existence. A mere slip over the precipice-like rock boundary plunges Man into the eternal and infernal banishment of suffering and chaos," says the Kurdish-Iraqi veteran of two consecutive Gulf Wars. "The atmosphere evoked by the exhibit is reflective of one's psychological suffering, the latter occurring at two fronts: Suffering due to the suppressive treatment an artist often falls victim to, as well as suffering due to repression that only war-conditions are capable of begetting.

On war and infiction, Spanish-American philosopher George Santayana says "...the glories of war are all blood-stained, delirious, and infected with crime; the combative instinct is a savage prompting by which one man's good is found in another's evil. The existence of such a contradiction in the moral world is the original sin of nature whence flows every other wrong. He is a willing accomplice of that perversity in things [he] who delights in another's discomfort or in his own, and craves the blind tension of plunging into danger without reason, or the idiot's pleasure in facing a pure chance. To find joy in another's trouble is, as man is constituted, not unnatural, though it is wicked; and to find joy in one's own trouble, though it be madness, is not yet impossible for man. There are the chaotic depths of that dreaming nature out of which humanity has to grow."

It goes without saying that this exhibit will mean different things to different people. To some, though hopefully merely a handful, it will mean nothing whatsoever. To most, however, it will probably represent something already found in them, though, whatever that may be, it will be awakened and brought to the fore. Such a dimension may be that of insecurity, anxiety, anger, sadness, denial, repressed feelings and stashed memories, etc. In this way, the visitor to this crypt is guided from the initial stance of an ordinary exhibition-goer, to interactive perceiver, to full participant to the process therein. He/she takes in the music, wafts in the incense-smoke, feels the textures, collides with and reflects the light emanated by the pyramids, and momentarily leaves the rest of the world behind.

Hong Kong Hungry Ghosts opera taunts China

By Mary Binks
Reuter

HONG KONG — In recent months, China has been the target of a noisy barrage of placards and protests over the future of Hong Kong.

Now, it seems, the curtains are about to part on a new act of defiance — by a legion of mean, hungry ghosts.

A Hong Kong theatre troupe is about to stage an avant-garde opera about the British colony's return to Chinese rule despite warnings from China that the group must not meddle in Beijing's affairs after the 1997-handover.

Danny Yung, director and co-founder of the experimental dance-theatre troupe, Zuni Incubator, will stage the eight-part opera, *Feeding The Hungry Ghosts*, as a colourful and dramatic look at the uncertainties surrounding Hong Kong's reversion in China.

"There is no way for us not to talk about Hong Kong's return to China," Yung told Reuters.

"We cannot, and should not, escape that."

"Every day on the streets you see question marks over the people of Hong Kong. They are worried. They think about what's going to happen. They think about how much say they will have over their own lives, when do they trust?"

"You cannot just sit still and wait for this to pass, because it won't. You have to ask questions."

It's not the first time that Yung, the

son of wealthy landowners who fled the Chinese mainland on the heels of the 1949 Communist takeover, has posed questions about Hong Kong's reversion to Chinese rule at midnight on June 30, 1997.

Two years ago, his troupe's controversial performance *Two Or Three Things You Want To Know About Hong Kong* which caused a considerable stir at the Belgian Festival of Arts.

Thousands of yellow ping-pong balls, symbolising the people of Hong Kong, showered down onto a red carpet symbolising China. Many were lost and crushed underfoot in the spectacle. A corpse, representing a "Tiananmen Square massacre victim," lay on the stage throughout.

The *Opium War — Four Letters To Deng Xiaoping* and *Romance Of The Rock* also did little to endear Yung to authorities in China as he probed attitudes to Hong Kong's impending handover.

A flyer for his latest spectacle features Communist China's founding father, the sanctified late Chairman Mao Tsetong, sucking on a straw from a Coca-Cola bottle.

In recent weeks, Yung says, he has been told his performances may not be tolerated as much after 1997, although the colony has been promised a high degree of autonomy.

"I've been told by (Chinese) officials I must not meddle in Beijing's politics after 1997, that I must not challenge the authorities in the way that I do now."

"They are so afraid of losing face, they are worried we'll use the stage to spread propaganda."

Yung remains adamant he won't change his style. "Will I stop posing questions after 1997? No, I won't."

His upcoming opera is an unconventional mix of traditional Beijing opera, age-old superstition, and a hint of Shakespeare.

Feeding The Hungry Ghosts derives its title from one of the biggest festivals of Chinese culture. Many Chinese believe that every year in mid-July the gates to the underworld spring open and the under-privileged dead, or unhappy ghosts, are set free to roam the streets and wreak havoc.

The alleyways and backstreets become dotted with sacrificial pyres as many local people burn clothing, paper money, and other offerings to appease the hungry ghosts.

To Yung, the allegory is clear. In their transition to Chinese rule, the Hong Kong people have become disembodied and unsettled, he says.

"Ask me if I'm going to celebrate. No, I won't. I'll be commemorating an event that will take us time to adjust to."

"Nowhere else has there been such a quiet revolution of transferring sovereignty from one power to another, and a lot of people have already left Hong Kong because of the uncertainties."

"Those who remain must face their future, and they must be smart enough to face up to change."



A young child holds a microphone to a statue of Queen Victoria as part of a poster advertising *Feeding The Hungry Ghosts* an eight-part opera that takes an avant-garde look at the British colony's return to Chinese rule (Reuter photo)

Ageing DJ spins hits in Shanghai disco

SHANGHAI (R) — It's a warm night in Shanghai and in the Hit House Club in a city suburb the disco lights are flashing, the dance floor is packed and Ace Of Base's *All That She Wants* is booming from the speakers.

The disc jockey is Chen Longgen, who at 65 claims to be the oldest deejay in China and one of the oldest in the world.

Born in Shanghai 18 years before the Communists took the city in 1949, Chen first entered the local entertainment industry as a technician with a local theatre, controlling the sound and repairing musical instruments.

"I was trained to be a technician, but music is my hobby," Chen said.

"I took up deejaying because I enjoy the music."

Ever-smiling and sensitive to the musical tastes of his audience, Chen says he enjoys modern Western pop and plays all the latest disco hits.

But he likes to play a lot of 1970s and 1980s pop music too, including Boh Marley, early Michael Jackson and Lionel Richie.

"Young people like new hits, but they are impressed after they hear the older records too," he said.

While he's up to date on Western disco, Chen knows next-to-nothing about modern Chinese pop music, the sort that emanates from Hong Kong and Taiwan and is heard endlessly in karaoke parlours across China.

"I don't listen to it much. I don't know their names," he said.

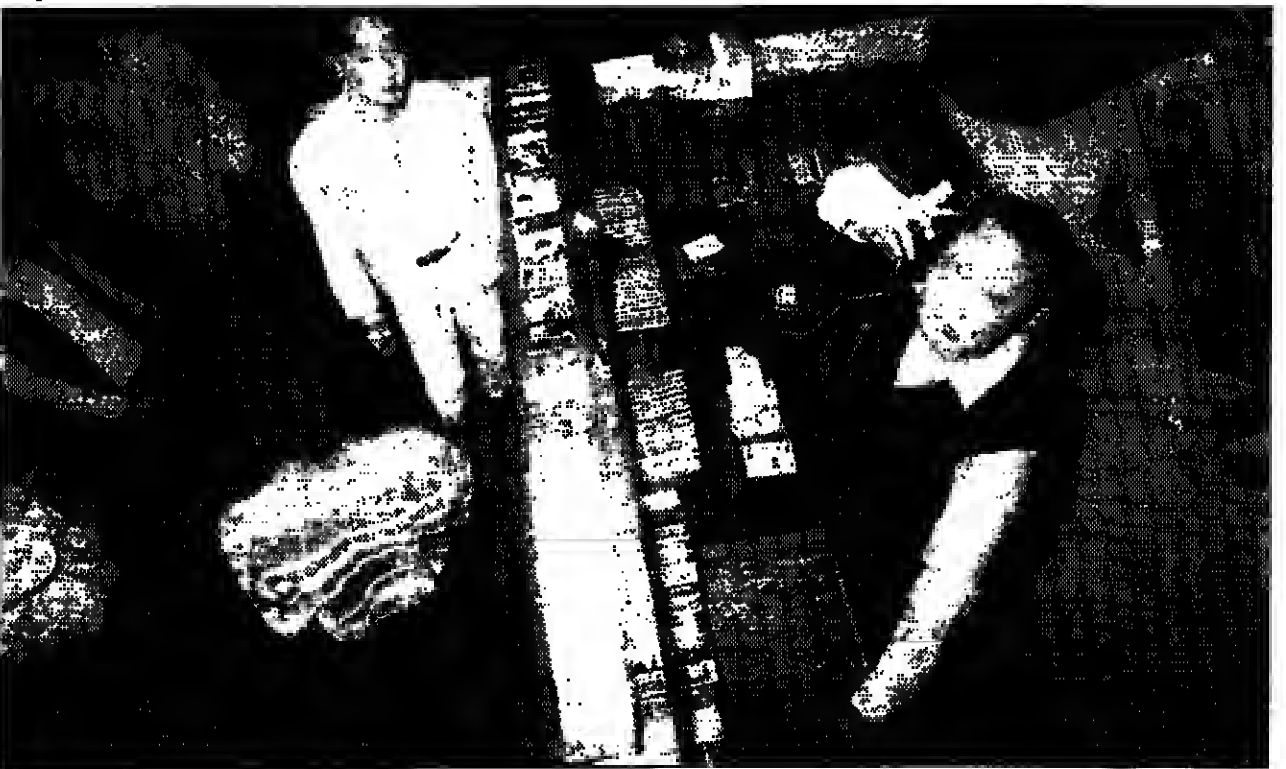
Asked about how the audience reacted to his music selections, Chen said: "When they compliment me, it shows their satisfaction."

"Chen is one of the greatest deejays I've ever seen," said Wang Limin, the manager of the club. "He's experienced and hard-working. It's a pleasure to have him here."

Chen's co-DJ, a Burundi student named Charles, was also full of praise for his mentor.

"Chen is wonderful. He learns so fast about the new numbers and knows what the audience wants. It's not easy for a man of his age," he said.

"I come here because I like disco, but it adds to the fun to see an old man like Chen deejaying," said Zhu Jian, a worker in his late twenties.



Retired Chinese worker Chen Longgen, 65, spins the disco hits at the Hit House club in eastern Shanghai. Chen claims to be the oldest disco disc-jockey in China, and possibly the oldest in the world (Reuter photo)



Pyramid of Light and reflection in the mirror

Researchers reveal key HIV virus protein section

WASHINGTON (R) — Researchers have revealed the "egg-like" structure enclosing the genetic material of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), potentially an important step to developing an AIDS-fighting drug, the journal Science reported.

"Any scientist who wants to develop a new drug that interferes with HIV needs to know what the virus looks like, and we've provided the first look at one of HIV's closely held secrets," Michael Summers, a biochemistry professor at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, said in a statement.

Capping six years of work, Prof. Summers and

other researchers at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County and the University of Utah in the July 12 edition of the journal gave a detailed molecular picture of a piece of the shell that holds HIV-1 enzymes needed for the virus to infect and reproduce.

The structure of the protein that binds with identical proteins to make up the shell is unlike any others previously seen, they said.

Called the P24 Capsid Protein, it has a single, exposed loop that contains an amino acid called PRO90 that binds to a protein called Cyclophilin A in a process that researchers said appears to be necessary for a viral particle to

become infectious.

In an interview, Prof. Summers described the Capsid Protein as a piece of a soccer ball that binds with other identical pieces.

Prof. Summers said the researchers speculated that for the viral information and enzymes inside to be released, that "soccer ball" must come apart, which may be triggered by Cyclophilin A binding with the PRO90 amino acid.

With this information, he said experts in drug design may be able to develop a drug to block Cyclophilin A binding with the PRO90 and the Capsid Protein, and possibly block the release of the viral material, he said.

Capsid Proteins of other

viruses have been targeted successfully in drug designs, he said.

"This important new information on the structure of the HIV P24 Capsid Protein suggests potential new targets for drug development, and provides new insights into the process of HIV replication," Jack Killen, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases' (NIAID) AIDS Division, said in a statement.

The National Institutes of Health, which includes NIAID, along with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, where Prof. Summers is an associate investigator, funded the research.

Survey: Doctors unsure which AIDS drugs to use

By Maggie Fox
Reuters

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Doctors are confused about which AIDS drugs to prescribe for their patients and have to base decisions on instinct rather than hard data, a recent survey found.

Only 25 per cent use the highly touted protease inhibitors as first-line treatment against the HIV virus that causes AIDS, the survey, conducted by leading advocacy group Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), found.

The group said its findings tainted euphoria over promising results of drug combination therapy reported at the 11th International Conference on AIDS.

"As promising new antiviral combinations move from a controlled clinical research environment into the doctor's office, we have to face basic questions like whether physicians have reached any consensus on how to use them," said David Barr, GMHC's director of treatment education.

Few clinical studies have been done on the effectiveness of various combinations, and those that have involved only a handful of patients, the group said.

"Many physicians are having to make decisions long before we receive definitive results from trials," said Dr. Gabriel Torres, director of the AIDS Centre at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York. "There has been controversy about what the initial therapy should be."

The group said its findings justified the attitude taken by many AIDS patients who say they, rather than their doctors, will decide what drugs to take and when.

"I am relatively healthy and I want to stay that way," Christopher Murray, a 28-year-old social services worker from New York, told a news conference. He had just started taking a combination including a protease inhibitor, but he was nervous about the decision.

"It's like driving a high-performance Maserati. I'm not sure I can control it."

Mr. Murray complained about the side-effects of the drugs, which he said he had not been warned about. "Maseratis don't give you diarrhoea, nausea, fatigue and headaches," he said. "I take an extra pair of underwear everywhere I go."

Such side-effects have caused many AIDS patients to rebel against drugs. They have also rejected tests.

Carlton Hogan, an AIDS clinical researcher at the University of Minnesota who is also infected with HIV, said he did not bother to take blood tests to see how much virus was there because he did not believe anyone knew how to interpret the information.

"We have this modern technology, which I don't want to know...but we have enshrined it," he told the news conference.

Forty "leading AIDS physicians" from the United States, Canada, Germany, France, Britain and Australia responded to the survey. Sixty-seven per cent of them said their first choice of AIDS therapy was a combination of Glaxo Wellcome Plc's AZT and 3TC (Epivir).

A third used AZT plus Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.'s DDI (Videx), while 25 per cent used 3TC Plus Bristol's D4T (Zerit). One fourth sometimes used one of the various protease inhibitors in combination with other drugs, but only 9 per cent said they always used a protease inhibitor.

Price affected what they used. Seventy-one per cent in the United States said payer constraints affected their decision to prescribe, while 57 per cent of those outside did.

"We don't have very much data that tells us AZT/3TC is the best treatment," Dr. Barr said. "But we've had a very successful promotional campaign from the company that makes those drugs."

Dr. Torres agreed. "It's been driven a lot by the marketing strategies that have been used," he said. "I would venture that most physicians get their information about AIDS from the media rather than from peer-reviewed journals."

World health officials warn of TB, AIDS symbiosis

By Joanne Kenen
Reuters

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — A vigorous global tuberculosis (TB) epidemic coupled with the AIDS crisis create a "lethal symbiosis" that must be quickly and aggressively confronted, international health officials said.

Tuberculosis can be cured, usually at a cost of only about \$11 a person, if countries follow the recommended public health procedures, officials of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the UNAIDS programme told a news briefing at the 11th International Conference on AIDS.

"Tuberculosis treat-

ment is straightforward and works," said Dr. Arata Kochi, director of the WHO Global TB Programme.

TB is the leading killer of HIV-infected people around the world, but treating them could prolong their lives by about two years, enhance the quality of their lives, and help get the dreaded lung disease under control, he said.

"There's a lethal symbiosis," for both individuals and communities, said Dr. Peter Piot, head of UNAIDS.

TB worsens the plight of AIDS patients, and the AIDS epidemic in turn expands the TB epidemic simply be-

cause HIV-infected people are so vulnerable to TB and can then transmit it to others, regardless of their HIV status.

Unlike AIDS, which is passed through sharing needles or unprotected sex, TB is airborne and does not require any intimate contact.

Dr. Kochi said countries having the most success in fighting the renewed spread of TB are those following the DOTS strategy, which stands for Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course.

Under DOTS, a trained clinic or health outreach worker watches the patient take his or her drugs. For

the first two months, the patient takes a combination of four drugs, and for the next four to six months, two drugs are prescribed.

Dr. Kochi said some countries, like Bangladesh, have had success in expanding DOTS to encompass home and community-based care. Schoolteachers, or educated family members have been trained to be the DOTS observers.

If TB patients skip doses, or stop taking their medicine before the full course of treatment, they contribute to the dangerously growing problem of strains of TB that resist the drugs commonly used to treat it.

AIDS — Men must take responsibility

By John Fashanu

John Fashanu is a former England, Wimbledon and Aston Villa football star. He is the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) U.K. special representative for the African child. In this special feature, he talks about why he is campaigning against HIV/AIDS in Africa.

EARLIER THIS YEAR, I was invited to help launch the "African Footballers United Against AIDS" campaign at the Africa Cup of Nations in Johannesburg. Football is the number one sport in Africa. It has the unique capacity to reach out to millions of young men and women and improve their understanding of health issues, especially the threat of HIV/AIDS.

AIDS is the major health problem facing young Africans today. Two million people have died of AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, according to UNICEF. This figure will reach six million by the end of the decade with 50 per cent of HIV infections occurring among 15 to 24 year olds.

The aim of the campaign is to get the message across — to men in particular — that in Africa it is men who must take the first responsibility for halting the spread of HIV/AIDS.

In February this year, I visited Tanzania. I learned of the problems which the AIDS epidemic is causing — there is a severe social problem, the country is suffering huge economic losses due to increasing health and funeral costs and there is a general fall in productivity.

Much of the good work that development agencies have done to reduce infant and child mortality over the past decade is being threatened by this epidemic.

I visited the Dodo Dodo Centre for street children where I referred a match between two teams, including some girls. It was a great sight seeing the look on some of these kids' faces.

I grew up in a Barnardo's children's home after my parents' separation. I know what it is like to start with nothing. I was able to make something of my life. Given the chance, and given the knowledge to pro-

tect themselves from HIV/AIDS, so can they.

The campaign also aims to get HIV/AIDS taken more seriously by political leaders.

Because I am well-known as a sportsman — at least as well in Africa as in Britain — it is possible for me to get to meet the presidents and leaders of countries in a way that an aid worker or politician may not be able to do. In between the usual football talk, I have been able to raise issues about HIV/AIDS, as well as discussing with them how to 'improve' the plight of African children.

Working as part of the African Footballers United Against AIDS team — which also includes other footballers like Liberia's George Weah, South African Doctor Khumalo and Zambian Kalusha Bwalya — has been hectic and hard work, but has also given me great pleasure, especially when I've been speaking directly to young people and youth organisations who come to watch the games.

I have learned from them to be culturally sensitive

and I hope that my influence has contributed to changes in behaviour and practices among the young that will stem the advance of HIV/AIDS.

I have also learned about the many good things happening in Africa.

It is easy to get a negative picture of the situation in Africa, especially in the U.K. when we see reporting of crises like Rwanda. Even my little daughter, Amal, gets upset and says, "Daddy, all the children in Africa are starving. If I ask her if she would like to travel to Africa with me, that is what she thinks about."

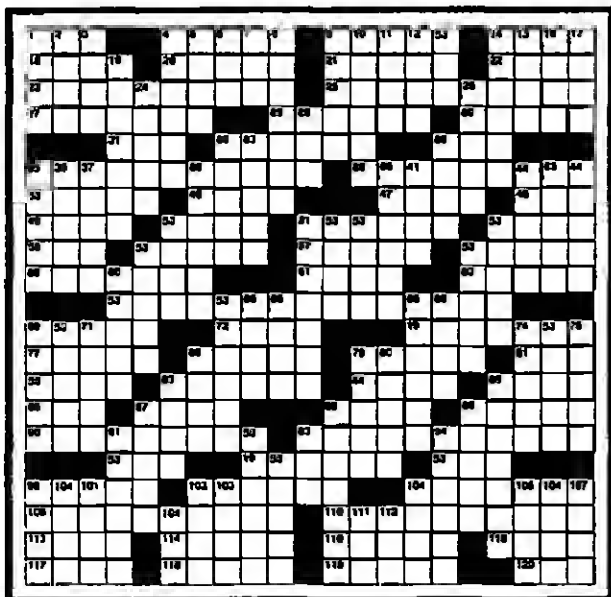
But I have gained a really positive picture of Africa and its people from my field visits with UNICEF and the HIV/AIDS campaigning and fund-raising work I have been spearheading over the last couple of years.

I believe there is a great deal we in the U.K. can learn from the work that many Africans are doing. They are light-years ahead in their understanding of HIV/AIDS and their ways of coping with it — PANOS Feature

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

PRODUCING PRODUCE
By Dorothy B. Martin

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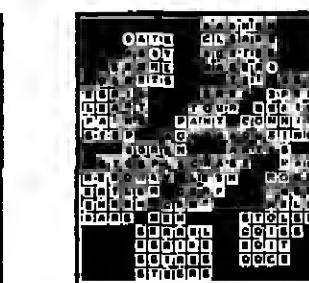
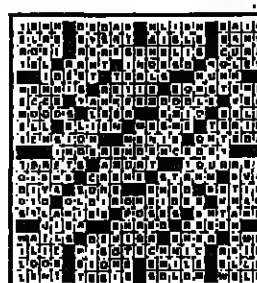
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Diagramless, 21A x 17D
By Frances Burton

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SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



- Last Week's Cryptograms**
1. Poor featherweight fighter scores knockout in amateur bout and dodges to turn pro for the big bucks and fame that go with it.
 2. Kangaroo at Kalamazoo zoo kicked keeper because he looked in her pouch. She thought he was a pickpocket.
 3. Bandmaster with exquisite taste wears group patching torn sheet music. "If it isn't baroque don't fix it!"
 4. It was a very brave man who first ate an oyster set before him.

- CRYPTOGRAMS**
1. JRR JRLCP XGDOALXLYMGB SK BSCP NO IDEAB IX YMO. LTY YRMNG BLOC NO IDEADUMB IX HOCK MURRY? — By Ed Haddad
 2. KAC LJREBJRJE QWJLEMBE ANDJQYTB TLK QMPXMBJ XYWPLKLS BW HBQYMBKE MAA ADROYC EMBKE. — By Earl Inland
 3. NBNT EMZKTRMU XUT MIXUMGIC XORN TOSSIN BIGUS JBN YORODY TBIMSDYI NIMJMBUDZI. — By K.C. Doyle
 4. LUCHAL MIX BLUM NCYN LU PITER IE PDITHN CRH LTN WIX EDUCATION. LI LCN C MUCD IM MDVTOW. — By Duane H. McGoy

Interleukin boosts immune system, study finds

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (R) — Injections of the protein Interleukin-2 (IL-2) dramatically increased the numbers of immune system cells in HIV-infected patients, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) said.

A study of 40 patients with early HIV infection showed that injections of the protein boosted CD4 cell counts, no matter how much was given. But those who took the highest doses, most frequently, showed the

most improvement.

"Our data suggest that therapy with subcutaneous IL-2, in combination with anti-retroviral drugs, has the potential to halt the usual progression of HIV disease by maintaining a person's CD4 cell count in the normal range for prolonged periods of time," said Dr. Richard Davey, senior investigator at the NIH's Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Dr. Davey, who presented the findings at the 11th

International Conference on AIDS, said it was not yet clear whether this translated to "clinical benefit" — if it made the patients healthier or feel better.

The 40 volunteers gave themselves the regular injections of the IL-2, which Dr. Davey said was also useful.

The NIH said the volunteers did not feel any more ill than those given standard AIDS drugs alone. "Now we know that increases in CD4 T-cells seen with IL-2

therapy do not come at the expense of a patient's overall quality of life," said Dr. Clifford Lane, clinical director at the Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

Interleukin-2 is one of a number of recently identified chemicals known as Cytokines, which are used by immune system cells to communicate with each other.

ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

- (1) A pavement artist.
- (2) A black flag with a white skull and crossbones, formerly flown by pirates.
- (3) a. Ruffle.
b. Riffle.
c. Raffle.
- (4) It has long feathers projecting from the back of its head, and these resemble quill pens behind a clerk's ears.
- (5) All are extinct, but the pterodactyl was a flying lizard.

PUZZLES

(A) NAME THE COUNTRIES:

FINLAND, DENMARK, POLAND, TURKEY.

(B) JEST QUIZ:

1. Maid of Orleans.
2. while he's still young.
3. there's no accounting for women.

By William J. Board

A GLOBAL NETWORK of undersea microphones, built by the federal government at a cost of \$16 billion, is beginning to spy on enemy ships and submarines, is beginning to rock the beat of the sea, singing, fish, whales, seabirds, shaking volcanoes erupting, and even nuclear weapons exploding.

The undersea ears can pick up noises that reverberate through the sea over distances of hundreds and thousands of miles, their sensitivity is such that they have tracked the movements of a single whale for weeks on end as it cruises, a blue whale, to deep songs.

The hidden network of microphones, known as the Sound Surveillance System, has been used less and less by the Navy since the end of the cold war. In the early days the service began to listen in on the chatter of federal scientists on the oceanic sounds and use them for oceanographic research.

But the sharing of the system is now speeding up, universities, ocean institutes and private companies begin to win access to the move of hundreds, if not thousands, of secret microphones, which span the depths of the globe.

Experts say the move promises new understanding of the deep as well as ways to save the oceans from ecological harm.

"This is a breakthrough in terms of applying technology developed by the military to solve day-to-day natural resource problems," said Amos S. Fox, executive director of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, a private group in Washington that sought the opening.

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UNDP : Growth is not eradicating poverty

PARIS (AFP) — Economic growth is failing to improve conditions for many living in developing countries, where 1.3 billion people — or one third of the population — live below the poverty threshold, according to an annual U.N. report.

The report, published Wednesday by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), shows that economic growth does not always equate with human development. This is due to either unequal distribution of income, neglect of basic needs (social protection, water, healthcare) in favour of other spending (military sector, prestige hospitals for an elite), or the reduction of social budgets.

For economic growth to benefit human development, the UNDP explains, it must contain several elements: Full employment and security of income, participation for all in the democratic process, an equitable distribution of wealth, social cohesion, cultural enrichment and sustainable development for future generations.

This must be backed up by making social spending a priority, and making economic opportunities such as land and credit available to everyone. The absence of such social progress may itself compromise economic progress, the report says.

Herewith a summary of the U.N. report by region.

Southern Asia:

- Since 1980, the GDP has increased by more than five per cent a year, and the GDP per person by three per cent.
- Military spending totalled \$14 billion in 1994
- 560 million people are classified as poor (half the world total), 600 million suffer from malnutrition, 250 million do not have access to drinking water, and 850 million no access to basic — one third of new-born babies are underweight, 80 per cent of pregnant women suffer from anaemia, 48 million children do not have access to primary school.
- In India, between 14 and 100 million children work; the figure is between two and 19 million in Pakistan, and between five and 15 in Bangladesh.
- East Asia:**
- Since 1960, the revenue per inhabitant has increased by more than five per cent each year, the highest growth rate in the world.
- There are 170 million poor, 100 million children have no access to primary school, one million women are illiterate.
- South East Asia/Pacific:**
- Only 55 per cent of the rural population has access to clean drinking water, and 41 per cent to basic medical care.
- The maternal mortality rate is 442 per 100,000 live births.
- Sub-Saharan Africa:**
- In 30 years, the ratio of military spending to social spending has gone from 27 to 43 per cent.
- 215 million people live in poverty, 120 million adults are illiterate, 170 million people do not have enough to eat.
- More than 80 million children of school age do not attend school.
- More than 20 per cent of children work.
- Maternal mortality rates reach 29 per 100,000 births.
- There is one doctor for 18,000 inhabitants (one per 390 in industrialised countries).
- 1.3 million hectares of agricultural land turn to desert each year.
- Arab countries:**
- Between 1960 and 1993, real income grew by three per cent per year.
- 73 million are poor, ten million under-fed, 60 million illiterate.
- Only half the rural population has access to drinking water, one third to basic sanitation.
- Latin America/Caribbean:**
- The real GDP increased by more than four-fifths in 20 years.
- 150 million are poor, more than six million children are under-nourished.
- 56 per cent of the rural population has access to drinking water.
- Maternal mortality: 180 deaths for every 100,000 births.
- Less than half of all children going to school reach the fifth year.
- Between ten and 25 per cent of children work.
- Industrialised countries:**
- The real GDP per head increased by more than three per cent per year between 1960 and 1993.
- There are more than 100 million poor, more than five million homeless.
- More than 30 million unemployed.

Officials discuss means to compensate Jordanians for bread prices in cash

AMMAN (J.T.) — Finance Minister Marwan Awad Wednesday chaired a meeting for secretaries general and directors of various ministries and public organisations to discuss a practical process for the disbursement of JD 15.26 to Jordanian citizens to compensate them for the difference in the bread prices once they are floated.

The minister stressed that the government wanted to ensure that the compensation reach citizens in the simplest and most feasible manner.

He suggested that all civil servants and military personnel as well as pensioners receive the sum added to their monthly salaries and that families which receive financial aid from the National Aid Fund be paid the whole price of the bread in addition to their monthly payments.

Mr. Awad said public and private companies can arrange for their employees to receive the sum directly added to their salaries or through the banks. He added that other sectors can receive their share from the banks which will be authorised by the government to conduct this business.

The government has said that it will resort to payment of compensation to offset the expected increase in bread prices.

Information Minister Marwan Muasher was quoted as saying that the annual subsidy will cost the government JD 64 million but the new arrangement will cut down government expenditures and save the country \$53 million a year.

International Community School Khilda, Amman

We are the only school in Amman offering the full British curriculum, with minor adaptations which reflect our international context, for children aged between three and eleven years.

The language of instruction is English and all of our full-time staff are UK-qualified. There is extra provision for the support of non-English speaking children. In addition, several curriculum subjects are specialist taught.

Our school provides a pleasant, stimulating environment with priority given to monitoring and enhancing the progress of individual pupils.

The new term begins on 4th September, but applications for admission should be made during July and August on Mondays at the school, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, or in writing to P.O. Box 2002, Amman 11181.

Further details: Tel: 841070 Fax: 847109

Jordan Times Tel.
684311-699634

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen

Peanuts

Andy Capp

Mutt'n' Jeff

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JULY 19, 1996
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get your finest talent today to the attention of bigwigs and gain their assistance in the morning, then do required career activities. Later tonight you can see spend this time with your loved ones at home.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Be more cooperative with your loved ones today and have more harmony at home, then see how much pleasure your desire will cost. This evening you can go out on the town with some close friends and have a good time.

GEMINI: (May 22 to June 21) This morning is the best time for handling reports and correspondence, other communications. Study your home this evening for improvements and determine if they will not be too expensive, if they are not then you can proceed.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Many tasks of a practical nature can be taken care of today, which will allow for you to be successful. Study how to handle an outside matter in some beneficial which will gain the attentions of some bigwig.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get an early start today in getting your personal affairs handled wisely. Later this evening try to solve a practical matter which has bothered you to see if someone can be of assistance to make the situation better.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Make a plan early today which can help you to quietly gain the personal wishes which mean much to you at this time. Later this evening will be good for the completion of some important project which has been given to you.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Early today arrange to have a good time later this evening with your close friends, then tackle troublesome matters and settle them. Tonight you can meet with some knowledgeable person and gain the information for your career activities.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Go on with the activities of the past two days until lunch time, then later go after your personal desires in some logical manner. This evening will be enjoyable if you spend this time with your loved ones at home.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) In the morning today you know how best to expand where your career activities are concerned, however, later handle a civic matter which has been on your mind for some time and which you feel will be quite successful.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to Jan. 20) In the morning today you know just how to handle practical and financial affairs well. Steer clear of one who depress you and you will discover that you will gain the success and recognition of doing any task by yourself.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Do whatever will gain you more prestige today in the community in which you dwell. Come to a fine understanding with a bigwig later this evening and you can gain success through your method of operation.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Get conditions at your career activities improved so that they will last for some time to come. Steer clear this evening of one who likes to boss you around and seek out the advice of some knowledgeable person.

Birthstone of July: Ruby — Tiger's Eye

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argrison

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

SIDAY
RITHM
WUTTIO
CROONB

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here:

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: CANAL PRONE MARAUD PURITY
Answer: What the king considered his toothache — A ROYAL PAIN

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Omni Uthman behind San Rock Hotel

Birthstone of July: Ruby
by — Tiger's Eye

Opposition calls for 'peaceful march'

(Continued from page 1)

plan to raise bread prices.

During a meeting with Mr. Kabarti earlier this month, deputies staunchly opposed the government's plan and urged "alternative solutions" to contain the budget deficit, the main reason behind the government's move to "rechannel" subsidies on bread.

The government, which says it has not set a date yet for raising bread prices, is currently engaged in drawing up a plan for implementing its decision.

Meanwhile, the opposition said it called off a rally in Irbid which was scheduled for Wednesday, after failing to get permission from the authorities.

THE Daily Crossword by Mary Derderian Brown

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ACROSS

- Italian wine city
- Carrots' partner
- Home base, e.g.
- Appear
- Sloping passage
- Frantic and furious
- Fill to overflowing
- "Dies —"
- Fix
- Gift shop?
- Failure
- Err
- Yerevan citizen
- Intriguingly different
- Na Na
- One kind of duck
- Fountain order
- Employment agencies?
- One
- Navajo dwelling
- Language: abbr.
- Fostered
- Cafe worker
- Make null
- Gun go.
- Diets?
- From this time
- Hip bones
- Per
- Bellowing
- Foundation piece
- Turn sharply
- Times of day, to poets
- Said of some tales
- Turner and Koppel

DOWN

- Burnt tree?
- Ooze
- Go on a —
- Block
- Kneeling bench for prayer
- Acquire through labor
- Amo, amas, —
- Eyeglasses, for short
- Recipe word
- Light item
- Eban of Israel
- Shan (mountain range in Asia)
- Vortex
- Indonesian islands
- Cheering word
- Assyrian god
- European river
- Ms. Callas
- Homone
- Not at all
- Transparent fabric
- Cartoon "lightbulbs"
- Throws
- System of exercises
- Ancient European
- It's measured by a plivionmeter
- Short beginning?
- Comes in
- Like, initially
- Most uncommon
- Poet
- Resounding blow
- Flying prefix
- out! (choice words)
- Lamb
- Satiate
- Yam
- Run swiftly
- Men

Jordan, Lebanon Upgrade trade protocol

Agreement to the two countries which boosts trade and economic cooperation. The agreement will be signed in Beirut and will be the first stage while the two countries are negotiating a new trade protocol between the two countries.

The agreement also provides for the exchange of goods and services between the two countries and for the establishment of a joint investment fund to be used for the development of the private sector in both countries.

A meeting was later held between Mr. Abul Ragheb and the president of the Beirut Chamber of Industry. The two sides discussed the role of the private sector in the development of the private sector in both countries to reach joint ventures.

Jordan, Lebanon upgrade trade protocol

BEIRUT (PETRA) — Industry and Trade Minister Ali Abul Ragheb and Lebanon's Trade and Economy Minister Yassin Jaber Wednesday signed an agreement that upgrades the 1992 trade protocol between the two countries.

According to the agreement which boosts Jordanian exports to Lebanon, only agricultural products will be exempted from taxes at the first stage while other products will be exempted gradually at a later stage.

The agreement stressed the importance of exchanging goods between the two countries and of establishing expo centres in order to give merchants and manufacturers sufficient information about the products of each country.

In 1995, Lebanon sold Jordan JD28.9 million worth of products while Jordan exported products worth JD24.2 million to Lebanon.

The agreement also stipulates cooperation in maritime transport as soon as possible.

Mr. Abu Al Ragheb and Mr. Jaber also reviewed the role of the private sector in both countries and called for launching joint investment projects.

Mr. Abul Ragheb met Wednesday with Lebanese Premier Rafiq Hariri and briefed him on the meetings between Jordanian and Lebanese officials. The two sides showed interest in strengthening economic and trade cooperation between the two countries to better serve the interests of their people.

Mr. Abul Ragheb also met with Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouez, with whom he discussed the economic relations between Jordan and Lebanon.

A meeting was later held between Mr. Abul Ragheb and the president of the Beirut Chamber of Industry. Both sides discussed the private sector's role in Jordan and the need to develop cooperation between the private sectors in both countries to launch joint ventures.

Amman starts steps to privatise electricity body

By Suleiman Al Khalidi

AMMAN — Jordan's profitable electricity utility has been transformed into the largest state-owned company in the first major step to privatise a key state concern, officials have said.

The national electricity company has been registered as a company owned by the government, and we expect this to become effective Aug. 1, Mohammad Arafat, director general of the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), told Reuters.

Changing the JEA, which generates electricity into a commercially-run concern is a first step to flotation in the next two years, officials said.

The new company will have 500 million dinars (\$706 million) capital, Mr. Arafat said. U.K. consultants Ernest Young estimated the JEA assets

at 750 million dinars.

JEA owns three major power plants with a capacity of 1100 megawatts and a further 500 megawatts under construction.

The government transferred JEA's estimated 2,000 employees to the energy ministry until a new ministerial committee decides how to deal with employees commercialised state bodies. JEA is the first commercialised concern under IMF-directed economic reforms which require phased privatisation of state utilities.

It will be the largest company in Jordan and analysts and officials say its sound financial position makes it attractive for foreign investors.

The profitable state telecommunications body and debt-ridden state carrier Royal Jordanian are going through the process of being transformed into

wholly-owned state firms.

Revenues of JEA rose to 134.5 million dinars in 1995 from 121.5 million dinars in 1994. The government raised electricity prices this year by 12 per cent, part of moves to end subsidies and reduce price controls, which is expected to boost JEA profits substantially in 1996.

"It's a very feasible company and sound financially that is now working on a commercial basis with no subsidies," Mr. Arafat said.

A law passed this year allows private sector investment in power generation, previously a JEA monopoly. This has encouraged foreign firms, including U.S. Enron and Amoco, to consider investing in Jordan's electricity generation sector as part of downstream projects in the energy sector.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTRE AMMAN - JORDANIAN											
ORGANISM MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 17/07/1996											
PRICE	12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	QTY.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADING	VALUE TRADING	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
250.000	209.000	ARAB BANK	17.9	1.60	3	100	21840	217.00	218.50	1.50	
1.340	1.440	HIC EAST INV. BK.	60.4	0.00	7	18480	14067	88	92	0.04	
2.700	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.0	0.00	2	1400	2071	2.19	2.19	0.00	
8.120	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	13.2	2.80	21	8313	41166	4.83	4.92	0.09	
1.040	2.600	JOR. SUGAR BANK	19.6	0.00	4	170	460	2.71	2.71	0.00	
1.240	1.200	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	5.7	7.29	12	19600	18611	96	96	0.00	
4.120	3.200	JOR. INVEST. BANK	17.2	0.00	5	1800	6480	2.80	2.80	0.00	
4.120	3.270	JOR. INV. FID. BANK	17.8	0.00	3	319	1052	3.30	3.30	0.00	
1.740	2.340	KEIT-AL-HIL (BEITUN)	1.5	6.28	3	600	1410	2.27	2.25	-0.02	
1.240	1.200	JOR. INVEST. BANK	5	0.00	57	70500	22390	1.32	1.31	-0.01	
2.740	1.000	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	9	0.00	7	7400	6714	1.11	1.11	0.00	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 172.32	%CHG: -0.72	126	127429	136810				
3.380	3.040	JORDAN INSURANCE	12.2	3.32	1	1000	3090	3.10	3.00	-0.10	
2.410	2.150	JOR. FIDUCIARY	6.4	9.81	1	200	484	2.22	2.27	0.05	
2.400	2.100	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.5	0.00	2	141	282	2.10	2.00	-0.10	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 124.12	%CHG: -1.36	4	1341	3736				
1.900	1.450	JOR. MORTGAGE FID.	10.9	7.95	10	1346	2936	1.50	1.51	0.01	
2.300	1.080	MATL. PORTFOLIO	27.4	3.15	9	4900	6729	0.96	1.01	0.05	
1.160	0.900	REAL ESTATE INV.	9	0.00	6	2200	2232	1.00	1.02	0.02	
1.420	0.960	KARMA EDUCATION	9.6	5.28	8	1700	6818	1.92	1.06	-0.86	
2.400	1.700	UNIFIED CO.									
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 111.37	%CHG: -0.46	46	19973	25139				
3.610	3.050	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	17.8	3.22	18	43906	126173	3.12	3.11	-0.01	
3.550	2.750	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	30.7	0.00	1	10000	28500	2.85	2.85	0.00	
5.960	4.750	ARAB POTASH CO.	15.3	3.96	6	18000	80800	5.07	5.05	-0.02	
10.560	8.120	JOR. PETROL REFINERY	9.2	8.84	12	8103	59679	9.00	9.06	0.06	
3.750	2.150	INDUSTRIAL COMM. AG.	29.0	0.00	2	400	681	2.15	2.16	0.01	
8.150	6.420	JOR. WORSTED MILLS	8.3	0.00	4	6933	42133	6.50	6.45	-0.05	
5.300	3.100	ARAB PHARM. NAME	19.7	9.88	22	7656	25957	3.28	3.40	0.12	
6.450	6.450	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	7.1	6.79	3	315	1855	5.80	5.70	-0.10	
2.600	2.100	JORDAN DAIRY	12.3	0.00	12	700	427	1.12	1.12	0.00	
2.630	1.710	JOR. FIDUCIARY	9.9	6.78	3	700	194	1.75	1.77	0.02	
2.430	1.400	RAPIA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	5	1500	2169	1.46	1.44	-0.02	
8.060	6.450	JOR. ALUMIN. IND.	12.0	4.55	12	140484	271701	4.22	4.40	0.18	
5.000	1.130	ARAB ALUM. IND.	11.2	11.24	1	250	631	3.75	3.75	0.00	
2.400	1.400	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	0	0.00	47	71650	36091	4.45	4.45	0.00	
1.500	1.060	ARAB PAPER CORP. TRD.	8.1	8.70	18	26350	32557	1.13	1.19	0.06	
1.210	1.210	NATIONAL SYRUM. IND.	9	0.00	3	1700	1703	1.36	1.36	0.00	
1.210	0.650	NATIONAL INDUS.	0.9	8.96	14	7118	4773	0.66	0.67	0.01	
2.310	1.060	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	49	26050	32280	1.27	1.26	-0.01	
3.800	2.540	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	70.3	0.00	2	800	230	2.80	2.86	0.06	
1.650	0.620	JOR. MAPPING CHEN	9	0.00	5	2450	2005	0.99	0.99	0.00	
2.240	1.050	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	27.5	0.00	41	12450	12190	1.40	1.41	0.01	
3.450	1.760	UNIV. MODR. IND.	5.8	10.01	37	13250	24495	1.95	1.94	-0.01	
2.170	1.140	JOR. IND. RESOURCES	16.1	0.00	63	15000	23787	1.43	1.44	0.01	
1.850	0.950	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	38.2	0.00	13	11265	10768	1.03	1.04	0.01	
2.460	1.750	EL -RAY BENDY WARP	7	0.00	4	3940	7110	1.80	1.80	0.00	
1.490	1.090	INTL. TOBACCO	27.5	0.00	14	4440	5174	1.15	1.17	0.02	
2.230	1.130	UNION CH. & YEG.	28.1	0.00	19	9250	10560	1.16	1.14	-0.02	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 104.59	%CHG: 0.03	425	444277	1192653				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 138.43	%CHG: 0.17	601	592842	1358237				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 17/07/1996											
PRICE	12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	QTY.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADING	VALUE TRADING	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
1.840	0.520	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	20.5	0.00	7	2900	1515	0.53	0.51	-0.02	
1.810	0.420	JOR. TRADE FAC.	16.8	0.00	6	3500	2209	0.64	0.62	-0.02	
1.980	0.370	MATL. CONCRETE CENTERS	8	0.00	8	8350	3436	0.57	0.54	-0.03	
1.000	0.700	UNION INV. SOC.	67.0	0.00	6	56750	12142	0.71	0.71	0.00	
1.200	0.530	ARAB FID. TRUST	0	0.00	18	22397	13637	0.60	0.60	0.00	
1.650	0.240	JOR. IND. MACH. JERICO	0	0.00	5	6000	2690	0.45	0.45	0.00	
1.000	0.510	ARAB FOOD & HND.	8	0.00	11	4750	2822	0.58	0.66	0.08	
1.850	1.370	KAZEL, CELESTINE	0	0.00	13	11265	16271	1.41	1.44	0.03	
1.000	0.520	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	0	0.00	4	1850	1036	0.55	0.55	0.00	
1.160	0.550	MATL. TEXTILE	0	0.00	1	500	275	0.55	0.55	0.00	
1.100	0.620	MATL. MULT. ENG. HAMMOU	0	0.00	15	4305	2803	0.66	0.66	0.00	
1.020	0.430	KAYAK OIL & HNDLS	0	0.00	2	1100	495	0.43	0.45	0.02	
1.000	0.700	JORDAN STEEL	0	0.00	10	6688	5482	0.82	0.82	0.00	
1.000	0.620	NIKANT PHARM. 751	0	0.00	4	900	222	0.64	0.64	0.00	
0.980	0.440	RAJ PHARM. 657	0	0.00	2	750	222	0.49	0.51	0.02	
1.920	0.440	IRAB. SMC	31.4	0.00	32	47320	24022	0.93	0.92	-0.01	
1.460	0.770	INDUS. CERAMIC	8	0.00	2	1800	1230	0.63	0.63	0.00	
1.000	0.630	PEARL SAW. P. CONV.	8	0.00	1	100	66	0.63	0.63	0.00	
1.600	0.530	KID. EAST COMPLEX	0.2	0.00	98	95050	60389	0.68	0.71	0.03	
GRAND TOTAL					105	263632	161124				

* New 12 months low
* Stock dividend during the past 12 months
* Listed during the past 12 months
* P/E ratio is 100 or more
* Negative P/E
* Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year

DAILY BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Badran wants 'free' inflation

** IBRAHIM BADRAN, economist and director of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, sees the inflation rate in Jordan at a "compulsory" level which can rocket up upon any major economic or political imbalance. He told a seminar on "Investment problems in the Jordanian economy," that although the official rate of inflation stands at four per cent, the World Bank report shows it to be seven per cent and others claim it to be even 17 per cent. As such, and without having a reliable figure, Dr. Badran called for accepting a higher level of inflation that would be commensurate with the normal economic activity so as to allow a harmonisation between economic activity and growth on the one hand and the rate of inflation on the other.

He also called for lower interest rates, noting that the cost the borrowing and the terms for it were among major obstacles to promote investment, especially to the local investor.

Dr. Badran gave four reasons for the fact that investment was not given the importance it deserved. He listed them as the long dependence on aid; expatriate remittances; the absence of innovative economic thinking and the role of the government as main employer of the labour force. Accordingly, he explained, "there was an absence of or ambiguity in the government-production link and between the production and consumption at the government because the aid and remittances had always compensated for that absence or ambiguity."

Dr. Badran indicated that the public and private investment from 1987 until 1991 was mainly centred in the real estate sector and that there is no evidence of any change otherwise. He noted that while investment in the construction sector has accounted for 65.8 per cent of the overall investments in the above-mentioned period, investment in machinery and equipment did not exceed 15 per cent. As such, he said, it is clear that that reflects an unwillingness by the investors to enter into productive sectors.

The economist expressed reservations over the reforms agreed with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund and noted that despite adjusting some financial and monetary imbalances, the actual economic growth was slow and the reform process itself was not in line with the growth (Al Aswaj).

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 17/07/96 19:38

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.4861	0.6472	1.2150	108.70	13.694	1522.70	1.6674	5.0320	
Swiss Franc	0.6725	1.0000	0.8716	93.75	16.638	1736.24	2.0361	7.4603	
GB Sterling	1.5458	1.5450	1.0000	167.49	161.44	2.1157	2352.57	2.5761	7.7444
Japanese Yen	111.28	111.28	0.0074	0.8716	1.0000	70.906	3.7564	163.89	3.7564
JP Yen	0.0091	1.3663	0.5947	1.1167	1.0000	13.619	14.60	153.5000	4.6284
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9758	0.4248	0.8778	1402.13	8.9012	16.35	3.3408	
FR Franc	0.1987	0.2950	0.1254	0.41116	21.57	6.2724	33.11	33.1100	

Energy

Oil	Unit	Previous
Brent	20.50	20.78
WTI	22.25	22.25
Bony	20.50	20.76
Oil	18.18	18.18
UL Gas	207.00	208.00

Mid-East Currencies

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.3965	0.17258	0.3241	28.9998
AE Dirham	0.2737	0.4091	0.17612	0.33097	29.3617
KW Dinar	3.345	4.97265	2.1645	4.06504	363.769
BH Dinar	0.5770	0.84477	0.37674	0.72737	68.517
CY Pound	2.1637	3.2153	1.3995	2.6278	235.216

...and the

IJO voices support of Palestinian journalists

official believe that to facilitate in the peace talks should not be allowed to proceed from the normalization process that could be based down by Arab governments in protest against headline policies of new Israeli government.

Mr. Ross told reporters on Thursday that the U.S. does not intend to impose any part on any of the parties involved.

"We cannot impose peace, we can pursue it in a way that is designed to find possible pathways and to create openings if there is a chance the potential opening," he said.

Administration officials said the Jordan Times that Israeli implementation of peace agreements should provide such an opening to end the stalled process.

But the U.S. thinks it is "unproductive to exert pressure on any party," he said.

However, they said that the American administration thinks that the Arab world is involved, especially, in Jordan and Egypt, are capable of reaching a breakthrough with Israel to move the peace process forward.

A week after the visit of

The biggest broadcasting event in history, reaching 240 countries and territories, Olympic officials said. They said TV viewers in Japan would have the most choice — Japanese stations will be broadcasting 976 hours of Olympic coverage, equivalent to almost six weeks' non-stop viewing, during the 16 days of

He added that Peace Implementation Force (IFOR) troops would not be intimidated by threats from Bosnian Serbs to take hostages if the military try to snatch Mr. Karadzic.

Under Dayton, Mr. Karadzic and Mr. Mladic were supposed to have been handed over to the international war crimes tribunal or the Hague.

ATLANTA (R) — The Atlanta Olympics will be the biggest broadcasting event in history, reaching 240 countries and territories, Olympic officials said. They said TV viewers in Japan would have the most choice — Japanese stations will be broadcasting 976 hours of Olympic coverage, equivalent to almost six weeks' non-stop viewing, during the 16 days of the games.